PARTY POLITICS IN THE U.S.S.R.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

Hang On to Hong Kong · Glenn Gould, Puritan · An Exchange on the New Left

The Harvard Liberal Economic Workout

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—Lawrence Summers

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—Robert Reich

James Madison,
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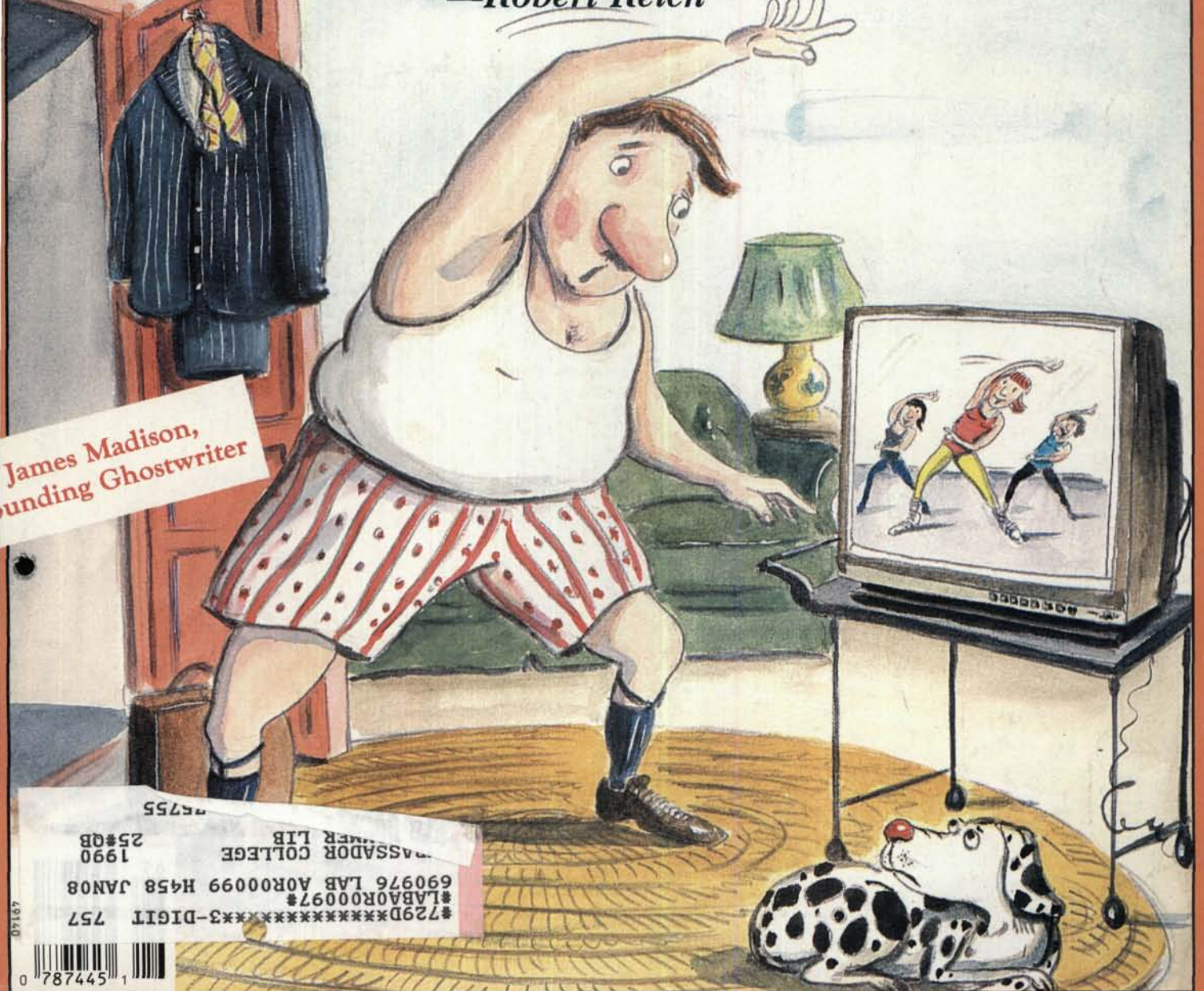

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CORRESPONDENCE

Liberalism's Many Faces

To the editors:

Like all liberalism, that of American Jews has more than one face and more than one source. The easiest and most fallacious way to discredit liberalism is to ignore these differences and distinctions. That is the approach adopted by Ruth Wisse ("No Left Turn," May 22). She defines liberalism in terms of misty-eyed and naive optimism, a belief that "reason" can conquer all human problems, the spirit of brotherhood unites all people, and the use of force is always detestable. With that definition, the rest is easy pickings. When things go wrong, Jewish liberals, unable to find any other explanation for continued stalemate, blame themselves and all other Jews. Thus the "rise of Jewish liberalism and Jewish leftism in times of siege are attempts to prove Jewish innocence."

This argument makes the wrong assumptions about the sources of much, if not most, of Jewish liberalism. For many the source is not pie-eyed and misplaced optimism, but the very imperfectibility of human beings, their irrationality and tendency toward violence. They are liberals because they believe that society must be organized in ways to counteract or at least ameliorate such tendencies. All liberals are not pacifists; some of the greatest ones, Jewish and non-Jewish, have understood that the use of force is indeed sometimes mandatory. They also understand, as some conservatives have not, that there can be limits to the use of force and that force will not solve all problems at all times.

It is close to slander to accuse all Jewish liberals of buying into the notion "of Jewish responsibility for Arab rejection . . . because the truth seems so bleak"—a conceit of many conservatives who want to believe they have a monopoly on realism. The difference of opinion over the Palestinian problem is far more complex than a struggle between the Jews who understand the need for firm resolve and those who turn to blaming themselves. The question of "land for peace" involves, among other issues, differing views on the ultimate limits of the use of force. That is far different than ascribing to those who oppose Wisse's views on "land for peace" a liberalism that "detests the use of force" and "precludes the possibility of intractable hatred or intransigent political will." I believe that I, like many other liberals, understand intractable hatred just as fully as Wisse.

Some strands of conservatism always have had trouble dealing with a liberalism that shares with them a skepticism about the nature and temperament of human beings but draws very different conclusions about how to deal with it. So the resort is to caricature, and Wisse has shown in that regard she ranks with the best.

There is a silver lining. Like others who are not so sure that they want to malign all liberalism, Wisse leaves herself an escape hatch. She concludes that "*true* liberalism has always required the defense of Jews as the imperfect people they are." Anytime that she wants to join, or rejoin, those of us whose liberalism stems in part from that very source, we're ready. In the meanwhile, as North American Jews, we concede her no monopoly whatsoever—as much as she and other conservatives would like to claim it—on "a determination to protect one another from [our] declared enemies."

SANDER M. LEVIN
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

Ruth Wisse replies:

For someone who professes to understand aggression as fully as I do, Mr. Levin is unaccountably trivial. He seems to believe that I used the political dilemma of Jews as a mere excuse for scoring ideological points against liberalism. Projecting onto me his own anxieties, he then accuses me of trying to "rejoin" the club. No, and here's why: I would only join a club that was prepared to have me for a member.

In a sense, that was the point of my article. Liberalism is to be judged by how effectively it secures the Jews, not the Jews by their obligation to liberalism. Despite its increasing slipperiness as a term, liberalism's starting point is generally agreed to be the notion of equality, "equal respect for individuals as persons." This is one of many creditable liberal ideas upon which our democracies are founded.

But the Jew also happens to be a member of a group that has become—in the Age of Liberalism—the rallying target for successive and ubiquitous nationalisms and ideologies that have sought their triumph in his extinction. Guaranteeing the unexceptional equality of the Jew requires determined opposition to those who have targeted the Jews. Many liberals, including American Jewish liberals, have failed this test before, and are failing it again. The Arab war against the Jews must be considered an assault on what I called "true liberalism," since it explicitly denies Jews—and Jews alone—their legitimate peoplehood. By first ignoring this assault, and then maneuvering to join its ranks, liberals have caricatured their own ideals.

In using the vocabulary of liberalism I was trying to put the best face on the activities of Jews who apply that vocabulary to themselves. Had I analyzed the political consequences of some of their "misty-eyed" actions without taking their protestations into account, I would have called them cruel.

French Lessons

To the editors:

In reference to Robert Darnton's amusing article on TV pseudo-history ("Liberty, Equality, Absurdity," April 3), the indictment of American television is not just that it sees history merely as a mine of sex and violence, but that it fails to see that the public might actually be interested in history for reasons in addition to prurience. Although European television is neither so good nor so bad as people often say, it recognizes that the same public that watches the film might be interested in a debate about how the film relates to real history, and about what it all means.

For example, a "telefilm" about Catherine de Médicis on French TV was as full of sex and violence (and gorgeous historical locations) as one could wish, but was followed by a lively debate among historians. Similarly, Belgian television recently used the film "The Go-Between" as the point of departure for a debate on the Belgian nobility in the 1980s that is still being discussed in the letters columns in the Belgian press. In both cases the public was able to phone in comments and questions for discussion. Perhaps some of the loss of audience of American TV could be reversed by a broader-minded view of the audience.

DAVID SCHRAA
Brussels, Belgium

Targeted Campaign

To the editors:

Regarding the proposed legislation aimed at so-called "assault weapons," TNR writes that "only those semiautos that can shoot large numbers of bullets without reloading—and are therefore ideal for playground massacres—are the objects of Metzenbaum's and Stark's concern" (Notebook, May 8). Pshaw! Everybody knows the "ideal" weapon for cutting down the kids is a plain old "hunting" shotgun. (Since it is claimed that semiautomatic rifles should be subject to machine gun-style restrictions because they can be "easily" converted to full-auto, why *not* go after shotguns, which can easily, and illegally, be sawed off?)

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FROM WASHINGTON

Noble Crowd

Even in torpid Washington the terrible events in Beijing have their echoes. On Sunday, a few hours after the horror had begun on the other side of the world, a stream of perhaps 2,000 people flowed up Connecticut Avenue. They were almost all Chinese and they were almost all young, students demonstrating in sorrow and anger against the murder of their brothers and sisters in Tiananmen Square. They were solemn and orderly, stopping for the D.C. cops directing traffic at each corner, but they were not silent. "Freedom!" they chanted. "China! Freedom! China!" Call and response.

The marchers carried cloth banners with the names of the universities where they study calculus and chemistry: Vanderbilt, George Washington, Penn State, Georgia Tech, Johns Hopkins. They carried signs lettered by hand on cardboard and computer paper. Most were in Chinese. The ones in English were moving in their unidiomatic simplicity: "Against Brutality," "Chinese People Are Bleeding," "We Are Also Crying," "Long Live the Noble Crowd!"

At the Chinese Embassy, which is housed in a boxy converted hotel next to Rock Creek Park, the chants grew louder, and now they were in Chinese. This group of students—this tiny, exiled sliver of Tiananmen's noble crowd—was at once angry and gentle. In the many demonstrations I've attended in Washington, one pattern is always the same: when the marchers arrive at the focal point (the Pentagon, the Capitol, the White House), there is a surging, potentially dangerous crush at the front. Not so this time. I could walk easily through this crowd, right up to the police barricade in front of the embassy. I asked a young man what the chant meant. He replied, "We are saying, 'You are Chinese too! Come down!' " His intelligent face, like many of the faces in that crowd, was wet with tears.

The demonstrators have left now, but a vigil remains. There are usually a dozen or more Chinese students on the sidewalk. They have stayed put even through the thunderstorms of the past few days. Passing motorists honk their horns to show support. The chorus of honking goes on all day and far into the night.

Those rain-bedraggled students and the drivers leaning on their horns are not as ineffectual as they may seem. They represent part of the immense price the Chinese Communist authorities will have to pay if they continue down the path of murder and repression. The program of economic reform that has brought China unprecedented if uneven prosperity is based on openness to the outside world. Some 20,000 mainland Chinese are studying in the United States, and perhaps ten times that many are here for other purposes. Without a change in the regime many, perhaps most, will not return. And the vast array of contacts and exchanges that has been funneling new technology into China's economy will end.

Even more important is the investment that has poured into China from abroad. This is at the core of what the Chinese government was trying, with some success, to achieve. There have been two main sources of investment, both of which will now begin to dry up. The largest is the overseas Chinese, all over the world but mainly in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan—the bank accounts of millions of diligent people whose tacit support had been gradually earned by the mainland government during the past decade. That support has been forfeited, and the money will follow it out of China. The second largest source of investment has been the United States. That too will stop, not only because the "business climate" will be seen as too risky but also because American companies will not wish to incur the wrath of the American people.

The student-worker revolt has for the moment been literally crushed—bone, blood, and bicycles under the treads of 40-ton tanks. But keeping it crushed will require sustained and systematic terror. That would mean an end not only to the students' dreams of democracy but also to the bureaucrats' dreams of "neo-authoritarian" prosperity on the South Korean or Taiwanese model.

Whatever comes next—state terror, civil war, or compromise and retreat—the crisis of legitimacy that has engulfed the entire Communist world is sure to continue. That crisis is being played out in wildly different ways in different countries. The only thing the varying responses have in common is that they are all unprecedented.

In Poland, 40 years of unanimous unfree elections have culminated in a (nearly) unanimous free election. The election was free though its result, a Communist majority in the lower house, was rigged in advance by agreement between the Communist Party, representing the fading fear of Soviet intervention, and Solidarity, representing the people. In a staggering reversal of past Communist practice, the Communist Party now beseeches the legal opposition party (on whose sufferance it rules) to share power (and responsibility for austerity) in a coalition government. The opposition declines ministries but offers issue-by-issue cooperation. The explicit goal of this astounding partnership is full-scale parliamentary democracy, which is to say the end of Communist rule.

In the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev charges into an unknown future, gathering power unto himself for the apparent purpose of using it to build institutions of law and normality. His method is frantic, seat-of-the-pants improvisation, carried out under the eyes of the world. His quasi-freely-elected Congress of People's Deputies, originally scheduled to meet for two days, has been in session for two weeks. Every second of its deliberations has been carried live by Soviet television.

And in China: catastrophe, crime, betrayal. What the Chinese students and their worker allies wanted, what they meant by "democracy," was accountability. The economic opening-up of Chinese society had brought inequality and corruption in its wake. The protesters were demanding not an end to the market experiment but a rudimentary political counterweight to its abuses. It would have been easy to satisfy them with a bit of respectful attention and a loosening of the reins on the press. Instead the gerontocracy chose darkness and death.

In China, 40 years of Communist propaganda have had an unintended effect. In the "People's Republic," everything was the people's this and the people's that. Every horror (and every gain) was carried out in the name of the people. What the Communists hoped was what George Orwell feared: that the words would change their meaning, that the language itself would become the slave of the state. But the words did not change their meaning. What happened instead—and this is crucial—was the destruction of any basis for legitimacy other than popular sovereignty. The noble words gave birth to the noble crowd. The words the party-state used to buttress its authority have become, thanks to its own actions, its mortal enemy; and the party-state has nothing to substitute for those words. That is why, even beyond the economic consequences of their brutality, China's shadowy rulers will ultimately prove to have destroyed themselves.

HENDRIK HERTZBERG

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

JUNE 26, 1989

BROKEN CHINA

It's unfortunate that hara-kiri is a Japanese and not a Chinese tradition. It would be an appropriate way for Deng Xiaoping, Li Peng and Chinese President Yang Shangkun to atone for the carnage they unleashed in Tiananmen Square. It is no consolation to observe that Deng and company *have* committed the political equivalent of suicide: when Deng's tanks crushed the students' "Goddess of Democracy" in the Square, they also destroyed his own lifetime monument, the economic modernization he set in motion. When his troops mowed students down by the thousands, they obliterated the loyalty that hundreds of millions of other Chinese may have felt for the regime he molded.

China's government is losing more than the respect of people all over the world. It will lose foreign investment too, and political favor. China's best young people will defect, either by remaining abroad or by becoming alienated and radicalized at home. Its workers may strike. Commerce and growth will surely be retarded. Deng may have driven his nation back into civil war after 40 years of unified rule.

And why? Apparently because authoritarian old men could not appreciate that once they set economic liberation in motion and opened their nation to the world, they would have to accede to demands for political freedom, too. Possibly Deng, who survived and then triumphed over Mao's brutal Cultural Revolution, mistook the desire of young people for democracy, nonviolently expressed, as movement back toward anarchy. Possibly the idea of true popular democracy profoundly offended his Marxist-Leninist ideology. Possibly it was the remnants of Confucian authoritarianism that caused him to strike out so savagely against a challenge to the existing order. And possibly he is just a very old man, blinded by his years and his isolation.

This is an important question—why? It is important because if the roots of the Tiananmen massacre lie in modern communism itself rather than in the particular circumstances of China, we may expect much more chaos in the world; it may turn out that Poland, Hungary, and the Soviet Union ultimately cannot countenance political reform any more than the Chinese could. And if there is one thing worse than civil war in a country possessing nuclear weapons, it is civil war in two countries possessing nuclear weapons.

We would like to think that the elections and debates taking place in Russia and Eastern Europe will provide the kind of safety valve that wasn't available in China, but there is no way of being sure that *glasnost* won't actually hasten the buildup of resentments and the explosion of civil strife. Certainly the very least that can be said is that bringing modern communism in touch with the modern world is a hugely delicate and problematic task. Each of the two transitions being tried in varying combinations in Communist nations to the east—from communism toward capitalism, from totalitarianism to a government somewhat more democratic—is riddled with danger. No one, for example, has figured out how to introduce pricing mechanisms in a previously centralized economy without bringing on high inflation. And inflation, remember, was among the popular frustrations that gave rise to what has become China's democratic insurrection; Deng is being punished not just for failing to follow a Western political model, but for more faithfully following a Western economic model. The question of how gracefully to make the transition to a free market economy is an urgent one, worthy of more attention than it has gotten in Western universities.

Such a cataclysm as has occurred in China humbles those in the West who think that the United States has the power to affect all historic movements elsewhere in the world. But even in humility, we should continue to express our values and exert as much influence as we can. The Bush administration has done just that, albeit not as early or as eloquently as we might have liked. Prior to the Beijing massacre, Bush did write to Deng, whom he knows, to counsel restraint. Afterward, he deplored the event, met with students, and cut off military cooperation to make a point to officers who depend upon the United States to help modernize China's armed forces. There are other steps that Bush still can take—suspension of technology transfers, economic sanctions, withdrawal of the U.S. ambassador—but these should be held in reserve in case more severe messages need to be sent, as they probably will.

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We were pleased to see that Great Britain has used its leverage by suspending talks leading to the transfer of Hong Kong to Chinese control in 1997. It would be unconscionable for Britain to deliver 5.5 million people into the hands of the kind of regime that rules China today (literally today; by tomorrow, or next week, the forces of enlightenment could conceivably be ascendant). China promised, as part of its 1985 agreement with Britain, that Hong Kong would be guaranteed 50 years of continued capitalist economic policy and a democratic political system after 1997.

But who can count on China's adhering to that agreement under the circumstances prevailing today? Arguably, it would be in the interest of even a highly repressive Chinese regime to maintain a thriving free market area as an opening to the world and as a model for economic restructuring inside China. But such arguments were badly damaged when the 27th Army's tanks crashed their way into Tiananmen Square. China's regime showed no awareness of its own long-term interests when it slaughtered its students. Why should we expect it to pursue its self-interest by respecting the rights of Hong Kong's citizens? And how can Britain condemn those citizens to such uncertainty?

Yes, of course, a deal is a deal, and the Chinese and the British long ago struck their deal on Hong Kong. But there is a well-known (if controversial) legal doctrine covering such cases, which Britain could invoke if China does not reverse course and proceed dependably toward moderation. Under *rebus sic stantibus*—codified in the "fundamental change of circumstances" clause of the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties—an agreement can be declared void if its "essential basis" is altered and if new conditions "radically transform the extent of the obligations still to be performed" under the treaty. The chance of brutal, despotic rule over Hong Kong's people would be sufficient to meet those conditions.

If Britain reneged on its agreement, theoretically China could take Hong Kong by force. But, it would be unlikely to do so—any more than it has tried to invade Taiwan or even Quemoy and Matsu. If it did invade, Britain and the United States would be justified in using force in response, rather than condemn millions of people to benighted rule. For the first time, Britain has also hinted that it might review its denial of residency to 3.5 million Hong Kong citizens holding British passports. Admitting them would double Britain's ethnic minority population, but if those people are in danger in 1997, Britain should provide them safe haven, and the United States and other countries should help. Similarly, the United States may have to reconsider the normalization agreements with China that declare Taiwan to be part of China.

It is to be hoped that all of this will remain in the realm of hypothesis. And there is a chance that it will. China's people have demonstrated that they want democracy. Its regime and military clearly are closely divided between the forces of freedom and those of repression, and under such circumstances, the people's side could well prevail. It remains quite possible that by 1997 a more enduring Goddess of Democracy will stand in Tiananmen Square, and that Hong Kong, and Taiwan, will feel secure in being parts of China. Let's hope so. Let's hope also that the example of China chastens other reform-minded Communist rulers, lest they, too, lose everything they've tried to build.

RUSHDIE 1, AYATOLLAH 0

It is difficult for Westerners to understand the threnodic frenzy with which some millions of Iranian Shiites escorted Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini on the last wing of his voyage to God. But then again, it was difficult for us to understand his mesmerizing powers while he was alive, and particularly during the past decade when he unleashed forces in the Muslim orbit that, though not ultimately successful in their own terms, will continue to haunt Islam even after their traumatizing impact on the secular governments of the West has been spent. His capacity not only to articulate but to incarnate in his own visage and voice the resentful frustrations, the plaintive gropings for meaning and succor of masses of Muslims, was a capacity to conquer minds in the fashion of the true charismatics.

Of course, Khomeini had an idea that infused and inflamed his ambition, intensified in exile. The idea was, as Elie Kedourie has shown, a very distinctive version of Twelver Shiite dogma. Simply put, the Shiites believe that Ali, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, is Muhammad's one and only legitimate heir explicitly designated by him. It follows that Ali's descendants were the anointed rightful rulers in Islam. But the 12th descendant went into an occultation—that is, he is alive but not, well . . . available. He will, however, return and usher in a universal state of divine justice. In the meantime and after one millennium, he is still the Hidden Imam. Khomeini did not claim, as other false messiahs might have, to be this long-awaited Hidden Imam. Had he done so, he would likely have been widely perceived as a charlatan rather than as the scholar he was. But what the Ayatollah insisted on was that the learned divines govern, and that they govern in the spirit of the missing Imam. At first, upon his return, Khomeini's followers referred to him as Naib Imam, the deputy Imam. But after a spell, lo and behold, they dropped the Naib, and he didn't quite demur. On behalf of his immediate colleagues, then, and especially in his own behalf, he revived the millenarian doctrine of the Mahdi, the rightly guided one or "master of the hour" who would hasten the arrival of the reign of the good.

Millenarianism always appeals to people cast adrift, in values and in life, by change. Thus, it is not surprising that Khomeini's word should have become so potent and volatile only after the ill-digested wealth of the petro-Islamic era had transformed or, at least, massive-

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ly disrupted Iran. The explosive effect, beyond the immediate world of the Persians, of the overthrow by a Shiite holy man of the Shah can be traced to the similar moral and mental chaos let loose by unimaginably corrupting and destabilizing oil dollars among the Arabs.

But Khomeinism's appeal was only partially based on the entropy of money. His power actually to produce a mob was his connection to, his sway over the moneyless and the powerless, the disinherited of the Muslim world. He became tribune for their grievances against imperialism and capitalism, the axiomatic scapegoats of the Third World. But what struck terror in Islam itself was his accurate depiction of the Sunni elites, both traditional and so-to-speak modernizing, as decadent trimmers, unresponsive, indulgent, gluttonous. In this he had as ally and resource deep egalitarian strains in Muslim thought, the more powerful now because of the unbelievable riches that were not being shared. Khomeini's brand of economic radicalism appealed not only to the oppressed but to cohorts of silly billies in Europe and America who welcomed his ascendancy as the triumph of a democratic revolution. Anti-Western and anti-capitalist, anti-Christian and anti-Jewish, primitive in a very textured way, his was an unbeatable formula for winning the sympathy of these deracinated and alienated loathers of their own kind. Even they, however, couldn't long stomach Khomeini and his revolution. They abandoned without ever abjuring.

Khomeini kept the Iranians in a war that bled them white long after their equally bloodthirsty enemy, who started it, would have been grateful to call it quits. Only God knows how many were called to His mercy, certainly a million, perhaps more. The desolation of the country and the disintegration of the economy will be a lien on the people's subsistence and substance for decades, perhaps even generations. By sponsoring and sanctioning hostage-taking and other more heinous terrorist acts, he brought down upon Iran an opprobrium earned by no country in our century save Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia, and apartheid South Africa. Worst of all, at least from the point of view of his followers, his effort to transform the nations of Islam failed. He had, to be sure, disrupted their ways. If now less smug and confident, more permanently edgy, the old elites are still entrenched everywhere outside Iran. It is as before. And yet, on a vast plain at the outskirts of Tehran, the masses were bereft and wept. Although a successor to Khomeini has quickly been designated, it is not yet clear on which head of the holy men of Qom the turban of Ali's vicar will finally come to rest—or whether, in fact, it will come to rest at all.

NOTEBOOK

LOW-WATER MARK: Pop quiz: Who is responsible for the recent memorandum that tried to stir up rumors (apparently unfounded rumors, if you care) that Speaker of the House Tom Foley is homosexual? Even if you didn't know that the memorandum had come from the Republican National Committee, you'd have to think immediately of RNC Chairman Lee Atwater, the man who did so much to lower the level of debate in last year's presidential campaign. (He didn't, for example, exactly discourage speculation about Michael Dukakis's mental stability.) And you'd be right. Atwater claims that the memo (calling Foley a "closet liberal," weirdly comparing his record to that of the openly homosexual Representative Barney Frank, etc.) was entirely the creation of the RNC's communications office; he's even fired RNC flack Mark Goodin to prove it. But whether Atwater wrote the words or simply set the tone that led a subordinate to write them is mostly irrelevant. Either way, that memo is an unmistakable product of Atwater's filthy mind. (Back in his zany college days, Atwater was involved in a two-bit porn business, charging admission to blue movies shown in dorm rooms. But that, of course, was before his heartfelt interest in public policy drew him into a career of public service.) Will George Bush ever rein Atwater in? Maybe so, if Bush's sense of decency outweighs his sense of loyalty. He'd better act fast, before Atwater succeeds in dragging not just campaign discourse but the entire American political process down to his level.

S&L HELL REVISITED: When we postulated the existence of S&L Hell (TNR, March 20), we had no idea that so many distinguished people would be pounding on the gates to get in. Most recently, assorted congressmen have insisted on tacking amendments to the S&L reform package, softening its restrictions for individual thrifts back home or for the industry as a whole. Notables this week come from the House, which is now debating the reforms. Henry Hyde of Illinois is leading the charge to save voodoo accounting procedures; James Quillen of Tennessee has carried Hyde's fight on to the Rules Committee. One member of our original hellbound crew, Frank Annunzio of Illinois, has now earned a place in hell's "charcoal broil" section for his tireless efforts to squash new capital requirements for thrifts. Bill McCollum of Florida and Stan Parris of Virginia (now running for governor) teamed up to allow thrifts to continue to invest in shaky deals while counting that money toward their capital requirement. Other representatives have riddled the reform package with amendments to assist specific thrifts: Doug Barnard of Georgia, Bill Nelson of Florida, Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania, Carroll Hubbard of Kentucky, to name a few. Let's be clear about the magnitude of the sin involved here. The S&L fiasco ranks with a select few in the history of the republic in terms of the long-term damage inflicted on the nation's material well-being. By all rights, lobbyists from the U.S. League of Savings Institutions—who for years essentially paid congressmen to bring on the fiasco—should be treated literally as untouchables; any member of Congress who so much as has lunch with one of them should be publicly flogged, or perhaps subjected to some more humane

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form of humiliation. That so many in Congress seem willing not only to talk to these people but to keep doing what they say is truly an indictment of our political system—yet another reason to make members of Congress less dependent on special interest money.

AND THE RUNNER-UP IS: Senator Edward Kennedy has announced an annual Profile in Courage award in memory of his late brother, President John F. Kennedy. The award, which includes a $40,000 emolument, will be given to a public official who has taken an unpopular but conscientious political stand despite what it may do to his career. Aside from the fact that the book from which the prize's title is taken was largely ghostwritten, it's a nice idea. There are many politicians in our history who would have qualified. (There may even be more than a few today.) Alas, President Kennedy would not be among them. He had many engaging features: grace, eloquence, an ease with smart people, a certain doggedness, even deep insight. But political bravery wasn't one of them. On the two most compelling issues of his tenure in the Senate and White House, JFK showed little political courage. Kennedy, representing what was a now unimaginably conservative constituency in Massachusetts, never spoke up clearly against Joe McCarthy or McCarthyism. He left that chore to Herbert Lehman, Paul Douglas, Hubert Humphrey, Wayne Morse, William Langer. As president he didn't risk alienating the Southern bloc in Congress by pushing for progress on civil rights. He left that to his successor, Lyndon B. Johnson, to whom he also bequeathed the Vietnam War and the fanciful conceptions behind it.

THE KURDISH PROBLEM: Oh so moderate pro-Western Iraq—certified deployer of poison gases against Iranian (and Iraqi) civilians, intriguer against Assad's Syria, patron-protector of Arafat's PLO—is now embarked on another atrocity. This time it's a mass expulsion about which, if precedent is any guide, the democratic countries will do exactly nothing. (See Prague Diarist, page 43). According to several British accounts, Iraqi troops have already dragged thousands of ethnic Kurds from their homes and expelled them from Kurdistan, their historic homeland, part of whose carved-up territory colonialist mapmakers located in northern Iraq. Like other Arab countries, Iraq is not really a nation-state in that most of its populace does not acknowledge the legitimacy of authority emanating from Baghdad. The Iraqis have other more primordial and contradictory loyalties: the great multitudes of Shiites to their own view of Islam and its this-worldly obligations, the Kurds to their own long sense of peoplehood. There has been a Kurdish problem in Iraq for decades. But no Iraqi regime has offered them even the chintzy kind of autonomy the Soviets allow the Uzbeks and Kazakhs. President Sadam Hussein's previous tactics—mustard gas, mass executions, sporadic warfare, free bombing zones, routine barbarities—have failed to quell this other, unnoticed *intifada*, so he has evidently decided to end his Kurdish problem once and for all by driving the Kurds out of Kurdistan and into the alien south. Some 300,000 people are threatened with deportation. There have been reports of widespread Kurdish resistance to the six Iraqi brigades executing the action. But predictably the American press hasn't been around to cover this disaster. This is not a hot story: no Americans involved, no Israelis. Into Kurdistan Hussein has begun to move ethnic Arabs, some of them Iraqis, but also Yemenis and Egyptians. Abracadabra, no Kurds, no Kurdistan.

BREAKING RANKS:

Cadets ignore controversy over Quayle

—*San Jose Mercury News*, May 25

West Pointers Hiss Quayle

—*San Francisco Chronicle*, same day

(thanks to David Shane, San Francisco, California)

How to solve the ethics mess.

ROUGH JUSTICE

By Morton M. Kondracke

The atmosphere on Capitol Hill may be paranoid, poisonous, and partisan, but what's been happening there has not been "mindless cannibalism," "McCarthyism," or a "lynching." Rather, what we're seeing is rough justice ironically analogous to that which prevailed during Watergate. Richard Nixon's defenders claimed his accusers were undermining the presidency, charged the press was hounding him from office, and asserted that his alleged offense—the cover-up of a burglary—wasn't worth impeaching a president over. In the end, they said that Nixon's predecessors had done worse.

Now, defenders of Jim Wright and Tony Coelho argue that respect for Congress is being undermined, that they were denied due process, that the press is ethics-mad, that their offenses—picking up a little side money on a book deal, making $6,800 on a junk-bond transaction—were too petty to cost a Speaker and a bright young Comer their political careers, and that lots of other people have done worse things in the past.

Even if most members of Congress are honest, and even if cash bribes are a thing of the past on Capitol Hill, the institution fully deserves the bath it's now getting. Ironically, the very group that benefitted politically and

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institutionally from Nixon's downfall—congressional Democrats—has created a system that's as abusive of power, in its own way, as was Nixon's White House.

To be sure, it's not as dangerous to civil liberty, but it's every bit as corrupt. Under what were viewed as campaign finance reforms after Watergate, access to members of Congress has been for sale to special interests, with payment (sometimes extorted) in the form of PAC contributions or speech honoraria. And those with access have used it to the public's detriment. The worst example is the savings and loan scandal, the costliest in American history, which will consume $150 billion of taxpayer money and is still being handled in a manner designed to benefit irresponsible S&L operators.

Republicans clearly are not blameless in the S&L fiasco—it happened, after all, during the Reagan administration—and Republicans in Congress are as caught up as Democrats in the special-interest money chase. Yet it is the Democrats who have written the rules and dominated Congress, and they are vulnerable to partisan attack for what they've wrought. Newt Gingrich may be unsubtle—and he may yet be shown to have indulged in unethical dodges himself—but he's helping make the system work. What do we have partisanship for, if not to have one party expose and check the wrongdoings of the other?

Obviously, there are limits, and they've been breached in the Justice Department's Nixonian leaks against Representative Bill Gray and the Republican National Committee's innuendo-laden attack on Speaker Tom Foley. These actions deserve the backlash they'll undoubtedly get. But, in general, partisanship is our system's check on wretched excess. So, when Congress considers reforms to rescue its reputation, it should build more elements of competition into the political system, not fewer.

One of the best ways to do this would be to strengthen the fund-raising role of the two parties in congressional races. Not only would it help to save individual legislators from the temptation of trading legislative favors for campaign contributions, but it would make incumbent politicians more accountable to voters by increasing their vulnerability to challengers.

Right now, money in congressional races goes overwhelmingly to incumbents. According to Michael Malbin, co-author of the forthcoming book *Vital Statistics on Congress, 1989-90*, it took at least $200,000 for a challenger to run a credible House race in 1988. The average spent by Republican challengers was just $99,383, while Democratic incumbents spent an average of $358,212. Inequality existed on the other side, too, where Republican incumbents spent an average of $408,000, to $143,000 for Democratic challengers.

According to Malbin, these differences in spending power are the result of political action committee support for incumbents and credible Democratic challengers (who attract PAC money because they belong to the majority party). Even business PACs now lean Republican in their giving by a ratio of only 3-to-2, while contributions by ideological and labor PACs go overwhelmingly to Democrats.

What can be done to overcome the advantage PACs give to incumbents? Public financing—providing for equal (and none-too-generous) expenditures by challengers and incumbents—would only perpetuate the dominance of incumbents, who already enjoy the huge benefits of free postage, travel budgets, and congressional television studios. PAC contributions (currently $5,000 per candidate per election) could be limited or barred, and limits for individual contributions (currently $1,000) could be raised, but this would only encourage "bundling"—the collecting of individual contributions by special interests for lump giving to congressmen.

One better alternative would be for the most expensive single commodity in modern political campaigns—TV time—to be provided free to both incumbents and challengers, but that still might not even out the competition. Best of all would be to raise the limits on the amounts of money that the two parties can spend at the local, state, and national level on congressional campaigns. The limit currently is just $10,000 for House seats and between $114,000 and $1.7 million for a Senate race, depending on the state. This doesn't include so-called "soft money" given without disclosure, ostensibly for party-building, but experts say this doesn't benefit challengers much, either. Significantly raising the party limits, with full disclosure, would strengthen the two political parties and insulate individual candidates from direct pressure from donors, whether PACs or individuals.

Even though it should, Congress almost certainly won't strengthen party power right now—simply because the Democrats fear Republicans can raise more money than Democrats do, especially from individual donors large and small. In 1988 Republican Party committees raised $4.1 million for House candidates, to the Democrats' $2.8 million. This was only a tiny fraction of the total the candidates spent, though—$140 million for Democrats (47 percent of which came from PACs, 50 percent from individuals) and $109 million for Republicans (31 percent from PACs, 63 percent from individuals).

The gap in party fund-raising power is narrowing, however—from almost a 10-to-1 Republican advantage for House races in 1980 and 5-to-1 for Senate races to a mere 30 percent edge for both in 1988. If the Democrats had confidence in their political appeal, they'd put the parties in charge of congressional fund-raising and quit depending on PAC contributions to individual candidates.

Giving constituents a better shot at ousting their representatives when they're misbehaving or performing badly is one way to help solve the current ethical crisis. But limiting the number of terms that a member can serve, as suggested by the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page, is no solution at all. This would ensure a Congress filled with novices and lame ducks, while the federal bureaucracy and private interest groups would

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continue to be populated by experienced professionals. Those who support repeal of the 22nd Amendment, which limits presidents to two terms, ought to be the last to say that good members of Congress ought to be forced out when their constituents want to keep them.

Members of Congress who perform creditably—and that's most of them—deserve to be paid more than $89,500 a year, and should not have to chase around after $2,000 speaking fees from special interests to put their children through college. They ought to be paid at least what the Washington bureau chief of a major news organization makes, or the president of a medium-sized business—somewhere in the vicinity of $125,000 to $150,000. And a committee chairman or a member of the leadership, with added responsibilities, ought to make more. No one should get rich as a result of public service, but congressional service ought not be limited to people who are already wealthy, which will be the case if honoraria are cancelled without a pay raise.

The passage of new ethics legislation certainly will happen as a result of Congress's Watergate, but the press and the public have to make sure that it's real reform, not a set of dodges to maintain the current incumbent-protection arrangement. Congress can get through its current ethics crisis that way, perhaps, but lack of accountability and competition surely will produce worse scandals in the future.

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

DANNY GETS HIS GUN

By Fred Barnes

One Saturday morning in April, President Bush took a group of advisers to Camp David, the presidential retreat in the Maryland mountains, to discuss the future of the Strategic Defense Initiative. The invitees included John Sununu, the White House chief of staff, Defense Secretary Richard Cheney, the five members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Vice President Dan Quayle. The joint chiefs were, at best, agnostic on Star Wars. They said it should be pursued only as a modest research program with sharply reduced funding. The loudest opposition to this came from an unexpected source, Quayle. He insisted the program should be geared not toward research but toward deploying a space-based shield against missile attack as quickly as possible. He recommended a specific deployment mode called Brilliant Pebbles, which involves putting thousands of small interceptors into orbit. Weeks later, the Bush administration took exactly the position Quayle had advocated.

My point is not that Quayle's intervention was pivotal. It probably wasn't. Cheney, after all, took the same position at Camp David, though less vehemently. The significant thing was that Quayle voiced a position at all, and then pushed it noisily. His chief benefactor at the White House, Bush, never did that when he was vice president. For eight years Bush acted as if vice presidents are supposed to be like children, seen but not heard. He saved his advice for weekly, one-on-one lunches with President Reagan. Quayle now gives Bush advice at weekly lunches (every Thursday, just like Bush-Reagan). But in four-plus months as veep, Quayle has sought to establish himself as something more than Bush's confidant. Quayle wants to be a serious player in administration policy-making. And as best I can tell, he's succeeding.

Quayle will never confess this to Bush, but his model as vice president is not Bush but Walter Mondale. Bush emulated half the Mondale model. He got regular access to the president and to the flow of information at the White House (except about Iranamok, according to Bush). Quayle is doing a full Mondale by jumping into policy disputes as well. Mondale saw this as part of his job as adviser to the president. "His advice was not always directly to the president," says Richard Moe, chief of Mondale's vice presidential staff. Neither is Quayle's.

In Bush's defense, he was constrained in ways Quayle isn't. Bush worked for a president who was ideological but not activist. That meant it would have taken a lot of moxie for Bush to carve an activist role for himself. He demurred. Quayle works for a president who is activist but not ideological, one who pries into issues small and large. This makes it easier for Quayle to meddle widely. Mondale's circumstance was similar. (Not coincidentally, Quayle's chief of staff, William Kristol, met with Moe on June 7.) Bush was also stuck with the problem of having been Reagan's foe in 1980. He was wary of alienating Reagan's conservative flock, which didn't trust him. Quayle doesn't have to placate conservatives. He's got to prove himself to everyone else.

Quayle's latitude in exerting his influence has two other sources. One is Bush's guilt. While he's never admitted as much, Bush must know he helped create Quayle's image as a dangerous lightweight. Bush thrust Quayle forward as his running mate without preparing either Quayle or his own staff. Quayle stumbled and the Bush crew responded by muzzling him. The second source is Quayle's conclusion—or at least it's the conclusion of his advisers—that Bush's veep style was politically disastrous. It produced Bush's wimp image. "He came within two days of losing [the Republican presidential nomination in 1988]," says a Quayle aide, referring to Bush's narrow escape in the New Hampshire primary.

The first indication of Quayle's activist streak came last December and January, when he put together his staff. Quayle wanted Kristol, who'd been Bill Bennett's

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top aide at the Education Department during the Reagan administration, as his domestic policy adviser. But when Kristol was informed by Robert Guttman, Quayle's initial chief of staff, that he'd have to keep quiet at meetings and be careful not to commit the vice president to anything, Kristol declined. An hour later Quayle called him. "No, no," he said, "I'm going to be energetic and activist." Kristol, one of the few young (36) conservatives with a grasp of issues *and* a flair for political strategy, signed up. He became chief of staff in May. Quayle rejected the advice of Bush transition officials that he hire Richard Solomon, a veteran of George Shultz's State Department, as his foreign policy aide. He wanted someone outside the bureaucracy, so he hired hard-liner Carnes Lord, a former professor of political philosophy at the University of Virginia and translator of Aristotle's *Politics*. Quayle enlisted an aggressive conservative, William Gribbin, as his liaison on Capitol Hill, and a former aide of Jeane Kirkpatrick, Joseph Shattan, as his speechwriter. He turned down the suggestion from Bush aides that he install a high-powered Republican operative as his deputy chief of staff. He didn't want a full-time political handler. Instead, Kristol recruited two aides from the Reagan White House, Mitch Daniels and Tom Griscom, and Republican consultant Eddie Mahe as an informal political brain trust for Quayle.

Quayle ventured into policy at the first meeting of the Economic Policy Council in January. As a courtesy, Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady asked Quayle if he wanted to say anything about the subject at hand, raising the minimum wage. To everyone's surprise, Quayle did. He suggested a tax credit rather than a hike in the minimum wage. When that didn't fly, he recommended that Bush present his proposed increase to $4.25 as a final offer to avoid being "nickel and dimed" by Congress. This idea was accepted. In the spring Quayle got the National Space Council, which he heads, to endorse continued funding for two Landsat satellites that take pictures of the Earth and for launching a third. Bush went along. Quayle also got Cheney to put $100 million in the 1990 Pentagon budget for the national aerospace plane, the one designed to fly to Tokyo in two hours. Cheney had wanted to kill the project or have some other agency fund it.

Space issues, among others, are discussed at long-term planning sessions instigated by Richard Darman, director of the Office of Management and Budget, and now chaired by Quayle. In April, Darman invited Sununu, drug czar Bill Bennett, and Jack Kemp, the secretary of housing and urban development, to a breakfast. The subject was what is known at the White House as "the second stage"—the policies Bush should promote once the budget negotiations and proposals he unveiled in last year's campaign are played out. Protocol kept Darman from inviting Quayle, but once the vice president heard about the breakfasts, he joined. Now they're held every week or ten days in his office. Quayle has lunch with Darman with about the same regularity. "Quayle is smart, he's quick, he's interested in ideas, he's forward-looking, he's got some intellectual courage," says Darman, who knows a Quayle administration would need a secretary of state, treasury secretary, etc.

Quayle's willingness to use his clout has brought supplicants to his door. After Commerce Secretary Robert Mosbacher called for government support for development of high-definition television, Quayle was approached by a cabal of Sununu, Darman, and Michael Boskin, the chairman of Bush's Council of Economic Advisers. They were alarmed at Mosbacher's advocacy of industrial policy. "He sounded like Michael Dukakis," complained a White House official. "He even repeated Dukakis's line about flipping hamburgers as the only new jobs we're creating." The cabal wanted Quayle to lean on Mosbacher. Quayle agreed to come to a meeting in Sununu's office with Mosbacher. He didn't put much pressure on Mosbacher, but he did lend moral support to those who did.

That wasn't the last Mosbacher will hear from Quayle on the issue of economic competitiveness. Quayle heads a body known as the Competitiveness Council. It hasn't done a thing yet, but Quayle will kick off its work with a speech on June 20. His aim is to leapfrog Mosbacher and pull the administration away from a flirtation with industrial policy. To make America more competitive in the world economy, he will stress reduction in the tax rate on capital gains, lower taxes in general, free trade, and deregulation—and a minimal role for government. Stretching his tether like this is risky, but the reward for Quayle can be great if Bush adopts his agenda. Not only will Mosbacher be forced to eat Quayle's dust, but Quayle's emergence as a policy-maker will be complete.

Three steps to economic prosperity.

LOST HORIZONS

By Lawrence H. Summers

During the early weeks of the Bush administration, Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady announced that his highest priority was to get American businessmen to start taking the long view. "We are headed in the wrong direction when so much of our young talent and so much of this nation's resources are aimed at financial engineering when the rest of the world is laying the foundation for growth," he said.

True enough. But now, months later, the administra-

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tion has made only one concrete proposal that affects businessmen's horizons—a cut in capital gains taxes to 15 percent—and that proposal has a rather shaky foundation. On the one hand, the administration claims that a capital gains tax cut will encourage investors to take the longer view by making capital investments more attractive. On the other hand, its claims that the measure will raise revenues rest on the hope that people will turn over assets more rapidly once their gains are taxed at a lower rate. Further, the primary effect of the cut will be to reward those who have already made investments and accumulated capital gains. (Less than five percent of the benefits of such a cut will go to encourage the venture capital projects championed by proponents of capital gains relief.) Tax incentives can do a lot of things, but they cannot create more old capital; rewarding capital already in place ends up just hurting the Treasury and helping the rich.

What, then, should Congress and the administration do to get American firms to take a longer view? It's true that a government where policy officials remain in office for an average of less than two years is ill-equipped to execute long-term plans. And corporate strategies are hard to legislate. But there are still some steps that can and should be taken.

1. The federal government should seek reforms in the way American corporations are run—real reforms, that is, not managers' proposals to ensure their own job security. Corporate executives constantly complain about being slaves to the stock market, forced to satisfy shareholders by boosting quarterly earnings and thereby forgoing investments that would pay off over the long term. They also claim that pressures to focus on the short term have increased as hostile takeovers have become more common, and that the increased debt burdens that often follow takeovers or even successful takeover defenses leave corporations strapped for the cash needed to take advantage of investment opportunities.

Most college students are familiar with this kind of reasoning. They frequently argue (as all of us once did) that exams have the undesirable effect of forcing students to cram, of diverting them from pursuing the subjects that interest them most, and of damping their creativity. They're right. But exams also persuade students to read more and drink less than they otherwise would. The market is really no different. Market forces may discourage corporations from taking the long view on some occasions. But the idea of "long-term intangible benefits" is often invoked to justify the corporate equivalent of Wine-tasting 101. One recently acquired company spent more than $75 million a year on an auto racing program that promoted its corporate name but none of its specific brands. It was a long-term expenditure, all right—so long term that there were no foreseeable benefits. When corporations are restructured and managers are given large equity interests, it's amazing how quickly expenditures on corporate jets, executive dining rooms, speechwriters, and promotions of the CEO's favorite sport are cut back.

Short of making every manager an owner, one of the best ways to encourage them to cut waste and think more about the future is to ensure that they are closely watched by those with enough inside knowledge to look beyond today's bottom line. In Japan, where leveraged buyouts and hostile takeovers are largely unknown, it is standard practice for a company's bankers to sit on its board of directors. The banks actively monitor corporate managers because they own stock as well as debt interests in the companies with whom they do business. Unlike American outside directors, they are not beholden to management for their positions. And their financial stake gives them a strong incentive to keep an eye on the long run.

Public policy can help create the right climate for this kind of corporate structure. Policy should not be designed to discourage the rise of institutions like leveraged buyout firms that specialize in holding management's feet to the fire. Instead, it should relax rules that permit many financial institutions to hold any bond, no matter how risky, but forbid or sharply curtail their holding of stock. Federal and state regulators should also see that corporate directors are not directly selected by corporate CEOs and that directors' compensation is tied to a company's long-term performance. This would encourage directors to instill long-term values among managers. Fiduciary rules should be amended to encourage pension funds and other large investors to do more than just unload a company's stock if they don't like what management is doing.

2. The tax system should be reformed to discourage, rather than encourage, short-term speculation. The volume of speculative trading on financial markets has skyrocketed in recent years. More shares were traded on the lowest-volume day in 1987 than in any month in 1960. And more shares changed hands in the first 15 minutes of trading on October 19 and 20, 1987, than in any week in 1960. Keynes warned of the consequences of excessive speculation 50 years ago when he wrote: "Speculators may do no harm as bubbles on a steady stream of enterprise. But the position is serious when enterprise becomes the bubble on a whirlpool of speculation. When the capital development of a country becomes the byproduct of the activities of a casino, the job is likely to be ill-done."

Using a capital gains tax rate cut to bribe rich investors to sell their stocks, as the administration proposes to do, just floods the casino with more chips. Fortunately, there is an excellent tax instrument for discouraging speculation and lengthening managerial horizons. Virtually alone among major financial centers, the United States does not levy taxes on the turnover of stocks and other securities. Transactions taxes raised more than $12 billion in Japan in the last year and would raise more than $10 billion a year in the United States if levied at the half-percent rate now in place in Britain and a number of other major nations.

A half-percent tax would have only a negligible impact on investment decisions I make for my retirement,

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but it would have a major impact on those who earn a good living by buying at 10:00 and selling at 11:30. It would discourage investors from relying on the "continuous trading" strategies that Brady's commission singled out as a contributing factor in the crash. In the process it might well make our markets more stable and our economy more productive.

Short-term speculation is essentially a zero-sum game. When someone invents a better way to program trade or forecast Carl Icahn's next move or GM's next earnings announcement, he gains, but whoever he trades with loses. When someone invents a better mousetrap, both he and consumers gain, as does the economy more generally. A tax that made short-term speculation less attractive would divert capital and talent into the positive-sum game of true investment and innovation.

Some small part of the $10 billion or more a year that a securities transactions tax would raise might even be dedicated to a sensibly targeted capital gains tax reduction. Such an incentive would apply only to investments made after the reduction, and would be limited to venture capital and other areas where the social returns far exceed the private returns to investment. A sensible reform along these lines would cost less than $2 billion a year over the next five years.

3. Increasing national saving and reducing our costs of capital should be our most important national priority. Improving the quality of management and cooling down the markets would help American business take the long view. But that's not nearly enough. As long as capital costs far more in the United States than abroad, American firms will have strong economic incentives to short-change the future. And no matter how good a job our financial system or our managers do, we will not remain competitive if we save less for the future than the nations we compete with.

Consider these figures. An American firm that issues stock has to promise prospective shareowners about eight dollars of annual earnings for every $100 of equity it hopes to raise from them. In Japan, the corresponding figure is less than two dollars. As a result, American companies demand much greater future returns before making investments. When an American firm makes an investment of $100 today that will yield $175 ten years from now, it is hurting its shareowners. The same investment would make sense in Japan. Small wonder that the Japanese take a longer view than we do.

The fundamental reason why American businesses have to pay more than Japanese businesses for capital is that American capital is in short supply. Over the last five years Americans have consumed more than 97 cents out of every dollar they have earned, as our national saving rate has fallen below three percent. This saving rate is only half the saving rate that we had prior to 1980, and less than one-third of the national saving rate in Japan. With capital in short supply, it's little wonder that the United States has had to borrow heavily from abroad to maintain even its current woeful investment rate.

How can we increase national saving? Perhaps through exhortation, perhaps through the use of tax carrots and sticks. Experience in both Japan and Canada suggests that saving incentives targeted at middle-income savers—like the IRAs that were scaled back in our 1986 Tax Reform Act—can work. It's more than a little ironic that Japan has recently instituted a tax on consumption while the United States, for all its spendthrift ways, is now the only major nation that does not tax consumption at the national level. (Although many proposed consumption taxes would fall disproportionately on lower-income consumers, it is possible to fashion one that doesn't.)

Changing private savings behavior takes time. For now, the most potent and reliable way to increase national saving is to reduce the federal budget deficit. That would reduce the volume of government borrowing and thereby ease pressure on interest rates, which would in turn reduce the costs of capital and encourage longer-term investments. It would also reduce our dependence on foreign capital and the resulting trade deficit.

Unfortunately, for all its long-run rhetoric, the Bush administration has taken a short-run approach to budget deficit reduction. Locked in by its pledge not to raise taxes, it has relied on a combination of accounting tricks and ludicrously optimistic economic assumptions to squeak by this year's Gramm-Rudman targets. That doesn't set a shining example for American business. Nor does it leave it with much capital to work with.

The administration would like us to stop worrying and just be happy. After all, the economy has been growing for six years and unemployment and inflation are relatively low. Besides, problems often solve themselves before the public sector gets its act together. So why waste the effort?

It's certainly true that gloomy talk is cheap. But the world's investors have put their money behind the mouths of the worriers. Even those who are not concerned by the blighting of lunch-pail America should worry about this: in 1988 the combined stock market value of corporate America was less than two-thirds of the combined value of corporate Japan. Just eight years earlier, the combined value of corporate America was 3.5 times greater than the value of corporate Japan.

These and other such numbers place the pro-complacency forces in a no-win situation. If markets *can* be relied on to get things right, then numbers such as these mean we have serious problems on our hands. If markets left alone *can't* be relied on to get things right, then it's hard to see why we shouldn't tax and regulate them. Either way, it's time for the administration to move beyond rhetoric and start laying a foundation for the growth it covets.

LAWRENCE H. SUMMERS is professor of economics at Harvard University.

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So you want an industrial policy.

MEMBERS ONLY

By Robert B. Reich

The news out of Washington these days may leave some liberal Democrats wondering whether they've died and gone to industrial-policy heaven. A *Republican* administration has been insisting that we subsidize sunrise industries, guard American technologies from easy access by foreign companies, and force foreign countries to open their markets to American products. This unabashed display of economic nationalism—led by Special Trade Representative Carla Hills, Commerce Secretary Robert Mosbacher, and the Pentagon's Advanced Research Project Agency (DARPA) director, Craig Fields—is reminiscent of Richard Nixon's historic overture to Peking: only a Republican administration could so brazenly do what Democrats advocated for so long—in this case, using the powers of government to rebuild the American industrial base.

Not so fast. In evaluating national policy, one of the most important questions is the one asked by Tonto after the Lone Ranger exclaimed, "We're surrounded!" To wit: "Who's *we*, kimosabe?" When Hills, Mosbacher, and Fields use the pronoun "we"—as in "we are making progress opening their markets" (Hills) or "we must promote our future technologies" (Mosbacher)—they are referring to American corporations. Yet American corporations only tangentially embody "we" Americans.

Consider the administration's demand that foreigners open their markets to "American" products. Hills now accuses Japan of excluding Motorola from the lucrative Tokyo market for cellular telephones, and hints darkly at retaliation. But where does Motorola design its cellular telephones? In Malaysia. Where does it make the ones it is trying to sell in Japan? In a factory in Kuala Lumpur. So who will benefit if Hills's tough talk opens the Tokyo market to Motorola? A handful of Americans who provide managerial, financial, and strategic services to Motorola's worldwide operations, and a much larger number of engineers and production workers in Southeast Asia.

Motorola's American shareholders will also benefit, of course, but most of them are passive investors in pension funds, insurance funds, or mutual funds that own Motorola shares for a few days or hours. If the price of Motorola's shares rises a few points because it can now sell its pagers in Tokyo, fine. But if Carla Hills fails, there will always be another company to bet on, somewhere else in the world; American investors now roam the globe in search of quick returns. Moreover, foreign investors have also gone global; Motorola's good fortune will no doubt make some Japanese stockholders wealthier as well.

The irony runs deeper. It so happens that thousands of Americans are now making cellular telephone equipment in the United States for export. And some of the components they produce find their way into telephones sold in the Tokyo market. But the companies these Americans work for aren't of concern to Hills because they have Japanese names and receive financing and managerial services from Japan—even though more American labor is now being exported to Japan through them than would be exported through Motorola were all trade barriers removed.

This pattern is emerging for a wide range of goods and services: foreigners are working for us (in the sense that the labors of foreign engineers, fabricators, and production workers are being combined with American capital and management services); and we are working for them (vice versa). Sony now exports to Europe audiotapes and videotapes made by Americans in a factory in Dotham, Alabama, and audio recorders from another plant in Fort Lauderdale. Honda sends about 50,000 cars to Asia (including Japan) from its American factories. There's even a Japanese-owned rice mill in California whose output is converted into sake, then exported to Japan. At the same time, IBM employs thousands of people in its Japanese factories and laboratories; it is now Japan's major exporter of computers. General Electric is Singapore's largest private employer. And about a third of Taiwan's trade surplus with the United States is attributable to American-owned firms making things there and shipping them back here.

The very idea of "American" products made by "American" firms is becoming obsolete. Lee Iacocca warns of the Japanese invasion of America, but American-made parts now constitute a smaller portion of the top models of the Big Three than they do of Honda's top-of-the-line cars. If the Commerce Department ever imposed a domestic-content rule for determining whether Japan was exceeding its yearly quota of cars exported to the United States, the Big Three would be in serious trouble.

A trade policy that focused on enhancing the value

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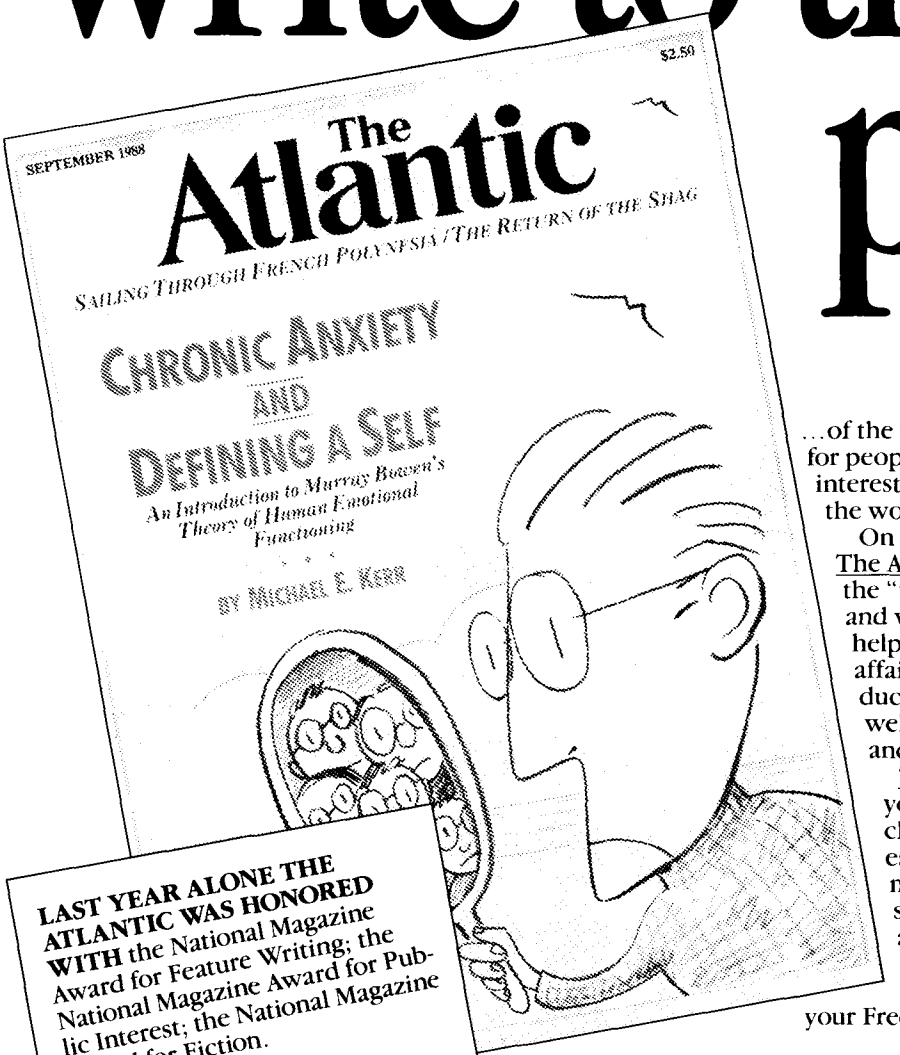
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that American workers contribute to the world economy, rather than on raising the profitability of American-*owned* companies, would place highest priority on reducing foreign barriers to American labor, especially labor involving complex design, fabrication, and non-routine production (what I have referred to elsewhere as symbolic analysis). It would, for example, take aim at rules requiring that complex products or components sold in the country be made there—even if the rules permitted American firms to easily set up shop. Yet in general the administration's new get-tough trade policy has done just the opposite—focusing on barriers to the products of footloose "American" corporations.

The same confusion mars the administration's new thrust into "technologies of the future," such as high-definition television (HDTV) and advanced semiconductors. Consider HDTV. Japanese firms have been developing it for almost 20 years; American firms have not. Now the Pentagon's DARPA is funneling some $30 million to firms wanting to develop it, and Mosbacher thinks more money may be needed, as well as special tax breaks and exemptions from antitrust laws. Both Sony and North American Phillips (a Dutch-owned company) want to be involved in these efforts, but Mosbacher says no; our industrial policy should be solely for American companies. "We need to be in the forefront of this emerging technology," he says.

But again, the question arises: What do you mean "we"? Even if Mosbacher and his friends at the Pentagon successfully launch America's version of HDTV, it's doubtful that many, if any, of the new televisions that emerge will be designed and manufactured in America. Zenith Electronics Corporation is the only remaining American-owned television manufacturer. And many of Zenith's TVs are designed and engineered in Japan; their innards come from Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan; and all are assembled in Mexico. In fact, the only television sets now made by Americans bear the labels—you guessed it—Sony and Phillips. *These* are the companies best positioned to get Americans involved in the HDTV business.

Or consider another target of the administration's industrial policy: those fingernail-sized silicon chips on which ever tinier electronic circuits are etched. Japanese firms now make most of the world's memory chips, a fact that worries Mosbacher and Pentagon officials no end. Intent on strengthening America's chip-making abilities, the Bush administration is now providing $100 million a year to "Sematech," a consortium of American semiconductor companies that includes Texas Instruments, Motorola, AT&T, and eight others. There is talk of even more federal money for additional computer and chip consortia, along with targeted tax breaks, antitrust immunities, and other benefits.

But even as Sematech gets under way, its members are going global. Texas Instruments is building a new $250 million semiconductor fabrication plant in Taiwan, which by 1991 will produce four-megabit memory chips and other integrated circuits. TI has also joined with Hitachi to design and produce a "superchip" that will store 16 million bits of data. Motorola has teamed up with Toshiba to research and produce a future generation of chips. Not to be outdone, AT&T has committed to building a state-of-the-art chip-making plant in Spain. So who will be making advanced chips in the United States? Just weeks ago, Japanese-owned NEC announced plans to build a $400 million facility in Rosedale, California, for making four-megabit memory chips and other advanced devices not yet in production anywhere.

The administration's industrial policy-makers apparently think of technologies as things that a nation's citizens "own," like gold mines, machines, or other tangibles. Thus, bolstering "our" technologies is equivalent to enlarging the assets of American-owned firms, wherever on the earth these firms happen to be designing and making their newfangled products. But leading-edge technologies don't exist in three-dimensional space; they exist in people's heads. Technologies are potential insights, born of cumulative experience. Today's high-tech gadgets will be obsolete in a few years or months. A nation's real technological assets are the capacities of its citizens to solve the complex problems of the future—which depend, in turn, on their experience in solving today's and yesterday's. Thus NEC's move to Rosedale may be of more lasting value to the nation than any operation that Texas Instruments, Motorola, or AT&T opens somewhere else; it will probably build the technological experience of American engineers, technicians, and manufacturing workers more than an AT&T plant in Spain will build the technological experience of any Americans who are indirectly involved in that project.

The point is that our standard of living (and that of citizens of every other advanced economy) depends increasingly on returns to intellectual capital, rather than to physical or financial capital. Money, plants, and equipment can go anywhere, along with their corporate logos; brains, however, tend to stay put, and to teach and learn from one another in the same geographic area.

Any complex work that involves decision-making and knowledge-building—the work of factory technicians using flexible manufacturing technologies, of design and production engineers, of research scientists—adds to the nation's stock of accumulated skills, insights, and experience. Our economic future, as well as our national security, is better served by developing a large corps of technologically sophisticated workers within the nation than by boosting the profitability of America's global corporations.

An obvious first step toward that goal is to devote resources more plentifully to education, ranging from kindergarten to postdoctoral work. A second step is for the administration to encourage Sony, Phillips, NEC, or any other global company to train Americans to design and make high-definition televisions, advanced semiconductors, complex parts for jet aircraft, and other exotica of the future. Invite them in; we need the training. By the same

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token, any firm joining a government-organized consortium and accepting a handout from Washington should be required to design its most complex gadgets in the United States—and to make them here as well. Why give subsidies to American high-tech firms if what's discovered within a national consortium is transferred to the company's global partners or its overseas researchers and developers, who then perfect it?

The Bush administration deserves credit for bringing industrial policy out of the closet. Since the founding of the republic, American government has funneled benefits to American industry. Bush's immediate predecessor was one of the biggest sugar daddies of them all: trade protection for American producers of cars, machine tools, semiconductors, apparel; bailouts for banks and S&Ls; military contracts for almost everyone. But news of Reagan's industrial policy was jammed by free-market blather and cold war bluster. By contrast, Bush and his lieutenants at Commerce, the Pentagon, and in the Office of the Special Trade Representative are intent on conducting their industrial policy openly and directly.

Their present challenge is to do it right, by not confusing the interests of American corporations with the interests of Americans. For starters, when confronted by the legions of business lobbyists now parading through the corridors of power with proposals for tax relief, antitrust immunities, and other subsidies they say are necessary to make their companies and industries competitive, Bush's industrial policy-makers should ask a simple question: How will it build America's work force? For Republicans especially, this may be a hard question to keep in mind.

Pluralism comes to the U.S.S.R.

PARTY ANIMALS

By S. Frederick Starr

"[The Party's task] . . . is to transform the entire mechanism of state into a single mighty machine, an economic organization which functions so that hundreds of millions of people will be guided by one plan." —V. I. Lenin

In mid-May the Soviet Union's Congress of People's Deputies met and, to no one's surprise, elected Mikhail Gorbachev president. The next order of business was to elect, from among the Congress's 2,250 members, the 542 who would constitute the Supreme Soviet. When the balloting was over, a disproportionate number of independently minded intellectuals had failed to make the cut. Although the most prominent of the dissidents—Boris Yeltsin—was later given a seat, the Supreme Soviet nonetheless seemed destined to be dominated by obedient members of the Communist Party.

In the West, such news is generally taken as yet more evidence that the "democratic" processes Gorbachev has implemented remain securely under his control, and that changes in the U.S.S.R. continue to grow mainly out of his initiative. Yet in an important sense, he increasingly finds himself not leading but reacting. On the crucial question of whether the Soviet Union will evolve into a true democracy, complete with multiple parties, important parts of Soviet society are now far in advance of Gorbachev, who continues to insist that the U.S.S.R. will remain a one-party state. Not only is the legalization of alternative parties being advocated in prominent places by both Communists and non-Communists; small, de facto parties are thriving, and the Congress of Deputies seems likely to include organized minority coalitions or blocs before long, given the forces at play. These forces could easily race out of control, leading not only to the creation of bona fide alternative parties but, conceivably, to the dethroning of the Communist Party from the "leading role" assigned to it by Lenin.

Indeed, the forces of change have acquired enough momentum that it increasingly looks as if the primary alternative to the coming of a multiparty system is for Gorbachev to bring the whole process of democratization to a halt: reassert tight Party control of the press, crack down on organized dissent, adjust the electoral process so as to further subordinate it to the Party's will, etc. From Gorbachev's point of view, these two alternatives—conspicuous repression and multiparty democracy—are about equally unpalatable, since either could result in early retirement for him. So far, Gorbachev has been acting as if he can somehow avoid a decision or, worse, that he can choose both alternatives. He has labeled all talk of multiple parties as "nonsense." At the same time he talks optimistically of pluralism within the Communist Party. In short, he's dancing.

Underlying Gorbachev's dilemma are the "informals"—voluntary associations, somewhat like those described by Tocqueville in *Democracy in America*. These clubs and societies are made up of people who band

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together to pursue public goals outside the bureaucratized official structures. Down to the 1980s they stuck to relatively safe areas such as historic preservation, pop music, and ecology. Now they have plunged into politics with a vengeance, doubling their numbers in the process.

Even before the congressional elections in March, the informals had demonstrated their clout. In Latvia they closed down polluting factories; in Kamchatka they stopped a proposed hydroelectric project. What the elections did was convert some informals into political parties in everything but name. Some three dozen self-created groups adopted programs, chose candidates, printed leaflets, and organized campaigns. One, the Democratic Union, actually calls itself a political party, thus violating a Soviet law that has been on the books since Lenin's day. At least three of these de facto parties have taken the field in every one of such diverse cities as Sverdlovsk, Kishinev, Leningrad, and Tbilisi.

The legal status of all politically minded informals, not just those engaged in electoral politics, remains unclear. Soviet law recognizes certain "societal organizations," but these are all tamed—national societies such as those for athletes or doctors. The law has no niche for organizations like Common Cause or the Sierra Club. Recognizing this, Tatiana Zaslavskaya, president of the Soviet Sociological Association and an adviser to Gorbachev, proposed in 1987 that the Party set up a commission to draft new laws on informals.

By then, however, the informals had already taken matters into their own hands, federating nationally. A meeting of some 148 groups took place in April 1987, in Moscow's Hall of Columns, under the unofficial patronage of Yeltsin, then the capital's Party chief. These round-the-clock sessions were chaotic—a "kindergarten for democracy," in the words of one organizer—but they set a precedent for scores of others. Naturally, when Gorbachev sacked Yeltsin the informals wanted a more satisfactory explanation for their patron's demise than the Kremlin's brief press release provided. *Pravda* attacked them for their shrillness and meddling, and Victor Chebrikov, then head of the KGB, declared that they must be brought back into line. Through the winter of 1987-88, the U.S.S.R.'s fledgling democratic movement was in trouble.

Then the informals were revived by none other than Gorbachev and some of his more impatient supporters. Gorbachev had called a national conference of the Communist Party for June 1988; he planned to use it as a platform for drumming his opponents out of the Central Committee. But it became clear that *perestroika*'s enemies in the bureaucracy would not give up without a fight. Gorbachev's ally Zaslavskaya proposed that "popular front" organizations be created to rally public support for Gorbachev's initiatives. The *Moscow News* and other reformist papers raised the same call.

Once more, however, independent activists were far ahead of the politicians. Autonomous Popular Front groups were already springing up profusely, both in Russian cities such as Leningrad and Yaroslavl and in the non-Russian republics. The Estonian group claimed 150,000 adherents within two months of its foundation. Though Popular Fronts were intended for non-Party men and women who would work as volunteers to champion Gorbachev's reforms, Communists with agendas other than Gorbachev's and proponents of non-Communist paths of development wanted to join the fun. By late spring of 1988 dozens of groups had been formed whose programs run from the safely orthodox to various forms of radicalism on the left and right. All, however, advocate participatory decision-making at every level of government, and this puts them sharply at odds with Communist practice. That some of the groups profess undying loyalty to Gorbachev and his program does not change this a whit.

In the end, the effort of Gorbachev's allies to politicize the informals as a means of cowing Party bureaucrats failed. Old stalwarts on the Central Committee survived the June conference unscathed, and it took Gorbachev another four months to dislodge his most resolute critics from the Politburo. Meanwhile, though, the informals had found independent politics to their liking.

Enter the electoral campaign for delegates to the Congress of People's Deputies. The electoral law permits a certain amount of genuine electioneering—candidates can form campaign staffs of up to ten persons, collect money, and print leaflets, and a rudimentary "fairness doctrine" requires that newspapers open their pages to diverse candidates. Still, it is inconceivable that drafters of the law could have imagined the frenzy of organizing and politicking that broke out in the months before the March elections, as people from hundreds of heretofore unpoliticized informals leapt into the fray.

Nor were pre-election activities confined to legal channels. Back in May 1988 the Democratic Union had formed in Moscow with the explicit aim of becoming an opposition party. "Our place is in the streets," its charter declares, and over the coming months members of the new group mounted boisterous rallies in some 14 cities. A Social Democratic Party came into being, with ties to French socialists; a Christian Democratic Party was formed at clandestine meetings in Leningrad; other underground Social Democratic and Christian Democratic parties appeared in Latvia and Lithuania, reviving groups banned when the Red Army invaded after the Hitler-Stalin pact in 1939. Most of these aspiring parties are minuscule, and some of their participants strike most Russians as decidedly shady. The Democratic Union, for example, was founded by a former Moscow journalist who admits having been a KGB informer and who, at age 36, lives on a pension. No wonder the police have been giving the Democratic Union a hard time, in the hope of somehow splitting in two the movement for political pluralism.

Leading Communists admit that the March elections were a stern rebuke to their party, sweeping away many

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old troglodytes and also several of Gorbachev's own appointees for good measure. It is more difficult for them to admit that, even though seven out of eight candidates elected were nominally Party members, the elections were also a triumph for the informals. In Leningrad, a group called Campaign-'88 swept the boards, while in Lithuania candidates backed by the pro-democratic Sajudis organization won 30 of 42 constituencies. In the northern city of Yaroslavl the Popular Front gained half the vote in its first outing and trounced the commandant of the Warsaw Pact's forces in East Germany, who had stood for election. More important, scores of pro-Gorbachev Communists (including Moscow's Yeltsin) entered the new Congress beholden less to the Party than to the informals that mobilized support in their behalf. This can only strengthen the hand of those in the Party hierarchy who think the time has come to slam on the brakes rather than enjoy what is bound to be a perilous ride.

With the March election, the debate over whether the U.S.S.R. is heading toward a multiparty system heated up. Party ideologues (and Marxism-Leninism is far from dead in some quarters) believe the U.S.S.R. is not moving in this direction for the simple reason that to do so would be theoretically impossible. Parties are based on classes, after all, and since the U.S.S.R. is a classless society there can be only one party. However, just about everyone sees that this formulation is nonsense. Even Zaslavskaya has said as much in several articles, going so far as to imply that the Communist Party serves mainly the interests of managers and administrators.

More than a few of the U.S.S.R.'s most prominent opinion leaders and politicians are convinced that the country is heading toward a pluralistic system. Boris Kurashvili of the Institute of State and Law in Moscow argues that diverse opinions exist and they might as well be embodied in legalized parties. Fedor Burlatsky, head of Gorbachev's Human Rights Commission, told Viennese journalists recently that "never in history has pluralism been associated with a one-party system. . . . I don't think the party will retain its leading role." Even the arch-Brezhnevite from Leningrad, Anatolii Gerasimov, when asked if a multiparty system should be considered, responded, "Why not?" Few are eager to hold discussions on the subject right away, however, preferring instead that the new Congress and Supreme Soviet first be given a chance to take root.

Most top officials are willing to allow the existence of organized blocs within the new Congress but oppose for now any attempt to establish multiple parties there. Yeltsin declares that "I am not the leader of an opposition party" and at the same time announces that he intends to ally himself with "like-minded people" in the new parliament. Clearly this is a fine line, and the existence of the now highly politicized informals makes it even finer. Unless checked, they are bound to link with one another in order to work with congressional voting blocs, thereby providing an organized, popular base for those blocs. How important are remaining differences between such a system and a multiparty system?

No wonder *Red Star*, the Red Army's paper, warns darkly that the informals "pose a great danger." Victor Chebrikov, now in charge of legal reforms, agrees, having had a firsthand scrape with several radicalized informals during a recent visit to Moldavia. His solution? Ban all informals that do not have the backing of the Communist Party. Gorbachev's formula appears to be only slightly less draconian. He has advocated disbanding those groups whose programs are judged to be "alien to socialism."

But is there any reason to believe that informals whose ideology is unacceptable to the Soviet government will pose any less a danger if they are declared illegal and driven underground? And can the nominally socialist groups suddenly become docile "societal organizations" even though their whole history to date, and their very being, is tied up with pushing the limits? Moreover, the recent behavior of both socialist and non-socialist informals suggests that they will not sit by meekly while certain of their number are suppressed. When the now-discredited Party leaders of Leningrad invited only the pro-socialist Popular Front to participate in last October's Constitution Day celebrations, the Popular Front declined and threatened to boycott the proceedings unless the Party invited non-socialist groups to participate as well. The Party leadership backed down. The sense of solidarity among groups with divergent programs is the most striking feature of the great surge of grass-roots politics in the U.S.S.R. today.

Even solidarity between Russian and non-Russian democratic movements is strong. When the Constitution Day rally finally took place in Leningrad, the historic flags of Georgia, Armenia, and the Baltic states waved over the stadium. Leaflets printed in many Russian cities proclaimed the slogan "For Your Freedom And Ours," echoing the cry of 19th-century Russian liberals who sided with the Poles in their rebellion against the czar in 1863. Even if Western journalists are overstating the likelihood of nationalist fragmentation, as they may well be, those demanding self-determination and self-rule in the non-Russian republics still pose a real danger to the regime.

It would be no easy matter for Gorbachev to suppress even the non-socialist informals. Force might be necessary. And even if he did not resort to the army and police he would pay a high price, notably in the international arena. Any action against emerging democratic movements will cost him credibility in the eyes of his many admirers abroad and possibly even jeopardize the Western credits he needs to give *perestroika* a chance. And remember: international esteem for Gorbachev has become a primary source of his power within the Soviet Union.

Even if Gorbachev somehow succeeds in deftly weeding out parties deemed "alien to socialism" and at the same time prevents them from becoming a radical un-

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derground, his troubles are not over. He will still have to deal with the many nominally socialist groups whose views are incompatible either with the Communist Party or each other. If some of the more extreme views are represented within the central Party it will quickly break down into competing blocs.

So where will Gorbachev finally come out on the question? While his own ideological chief, Vadim Medvedev, is reminding the *Baltimore Sun* that socialism has a place for multiple parties, Gorbachev himself continues to refer to the Communist Party as "that which came about historically," i.e., as the sole party brought into being by the inexorable workings of History. Clearly, for all his talk of intraparty democracy and pluralism, Gorbachev is not eager to see the formation even of organized voting blocs in the new parliament. At the same time he, too, has carefully hedged his bets, as if sensing that the movement toward a multiparty system may be unstoppable. This explains why he worked so hard last spring to assure that the proposed office of president wields even greater power than Gorbachev possessed as party secretary. In part, this was a clever way to thwart the lingering power of conservatives in the apparat. No less, it was an effort to assure that radical democrats from the informals not be able to trim the leader's wings.

The prospect of impending republican and local elections has further invigorated the thousands of political groups and the scores of partylike organizations. They have taken the elections as an opportunity to strengthen their organizations down to the precinct level. Action groups on the model of Leningrad's have been functioning in every part of the Soviet Union, hammering out programs, interviewing candidates, defending their interests through lawsuits, disseminating bulletins and propaganda, and forming alliances. Whether working within or without the Communist Party, such groups are seizing from below the initiative that was formerly exercised solely by Communist Party functionaries working from above. In other words, they have been doing everything they can to impose on Gorbachev a decision in favor of a multiparty system.

Gorbachev may have welcomed some of this as a check on the powers of entrenched bureaucrats. But apparently he also found it all very disturbing; this would account for his abrupt decision recently to postpone the elections to an unspecified date. Perhaps he sensed that the future direction of Soviet government was fast shifting out of his own hands and those of the Communist Party and into the U.S.S.R.'s emerging civil society. If so, he was right. As time passes it becomes more and more likely that he will find himself trying not to tie down the democratic tiger that has grown up in his country and that he himself has fed and uncaged, but to stay astride it.

Another busy summer for Jemmy Madison.

THE SPIRIT OF '89

By William Lee Miller

The drafter of George Washington's address to Congress on April 30, 1789, which was also the first presidential inaugural, was James Madison. The House of Representatives, feeling its way, responded after the custom of parliamentary bodies: having been formally addressed by the executive (elsewhere kings and queens), it formally replied. Its reply was drafted by—James Madison. The president, on May 8, responded to the House's response. And who drafted that presidential response? No peeking. Right, James Madison.

Madison was living a ghostwriter's dream, carrying on what the editor of his *Papers* calls a "dialogue with himself." And for good measure Madison drafted the president's response, on May 18, to the Senate's response to the president's address. Madison was like E. B. White's two-headed lamb, who could sing in two-part harmony and cross-question herself for hours.

In 1789 Congress was for a time all there was to the government of the United States. The House of Representatives was for a time almost all there was to Congress. And James Madison was for a time almost all there was to the House of Representatives. Madison in the summer of 1789 was the leading member of the House; and the House had seized the initiative from the Senate, which was bogged down in a seriocomic debate over whether the president should be called "His Most Benign Highness," "His Elective Highness," "His Highness, the President of the United States, and Pro-

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tector of the Rights of the Same," or "Mr. President." Madison spent his days dominating the legislative branch, his evenings advising the executive. The Constitution was only a sketch in a few broad lines. The United States of America, it has been said, consisted of a piece of paper and George Washington. Everything remained to be filled in. Madison, having been chief among those who produced the piece of paper, was now to be chief among those who filled it in. His ghostwriters' pen, deployed throughout the government, was mightier than any sword.

And what did Madison say in his exalted indirect conversation with himself 200 years ago? President Washington's Madison-drafted address suggested that Congress might want to exercise the power delegated by the Fifth Article of the Constitution—the power to propose amendments to the Constitution. The House's Madison-drafted response to the Madison-drafted presidential address said yes, we just might do that. President Washington's very short Madison-drafted response to the House's Madison-drafted response to President Washington's Madison-drafted address did not disagree.

But this intra-Madisonian dialogue did not recommend just *any* amendments; it suggested that Congress consider enacting—perhaps not surprisingly—Madison-style amendments. The president's address recommended amendments that would protect liberty—but not amendments that would endanger "an United and effective government." And Congress cheerfully responded to the president that it would consider amendments "under the influence of all the considerations to which you allude."

Eventually, Congress did that, but not without prodding from Madison. The first House of Representatives dealt first, understandably, with the sources of money for the new government, specifically in "imposts," and second, understandably again, with the organization of the executive departments. Madison took the initiative in both of these matters, doing research on the imports, exports, and shipping of the several states and introducing a motion to establish the first Cabinet departments—of foreign affairs, the treasury, and war. But while the debates on these large matters were winding though the first weeks of the new government, he kept reminding his colleagues of the importance of a still larger matter—the amendments that would constitute a Bill of Rights. Without Madison's persistence the amendments would not have come before the nation, in those days of Firstness.

Madison had, of course, prepared carefully. He always prepared carefully. He used a pamphlet that had been published in Richmond that brought together in a handy way the more than 200 amendments proposed by state ratifying conventions, and he sifted them down to 19. On June 8, 1789, an important date in American history, James Madison rose in the House of Representatives and presented these 19 as his version of a Bill of Rights.

At exactly the same time the Americans were writing their Bill of Rights the French were writing their Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, adopted by the French National Assembly on August 26, 1789. Where the French declaration was heavy on Ought and Ought Not and Should Be and high aspiration, the American bill was made of homelier stuff: concrete protections and specific commands. They are not speculative or hortatory but mandatory: Congress *shall* make no law, no soldier *shall* be quartered, no person *shall* be held. The American document is not a hope but a law, written by experienced legislators and intended to be enforceable in court, as Americans are still finding out 200 years later.

When the French adopted the constitution of the First Republic, in 1792, it was supposed to be so perfect that it made no provision for amendment. The Americans had made the same mistake in 1781 with the highly imperfect Articles of Confederation. Upon ratifying the Constitution, therefore, their first step was to amend it. And to amend their ideas about amending it: Madison himself had not originally favored amendments so soon. He had his mind changed by the merits of the opposing arguments, the realities of power, and the pressure of public opinion. That change of mind was a fitting sample of his own ideas, which in turn were the epitome of the American spirit of '89.

Madison had worked out an understanding of pluralism and of checks on power and had planted that understanding in the Constitution that was now creaking into action. At the core of this understanding was an acceptance of the persistence of differences among human groups. There was not going to be a "New Humanity" on the "other side" of the revolution; when you got to the other side, as the Americans had already long since done by '89, you found humanity still loaded with self-interest, and with differing attachments and values. In "republican" politics—in its American, Madisonian variety—those differences were not something to be excoriated, dismissed, or stamped out in the name of "the People" or "the Revolution" or "Justice" or "Virtue." They were not even much to be regretted, these human differences. They were rather to be taken for granted—and turned to the support of liberty and of republican government.

What one reads about the leaders of the French Revolution differs markedly on that decisive point. They did not seem, to put it mildly, to rejoice in the differences among factions. R. R. Palmer wrote this about the influence of Rousseau upon them:

> In the philosophy of [Rousseau's] Social Contract the "people" or "nation" is a moral abstraction. It is by nature good; its will is law. It is a solid indivisible thing. That the people might differ among themselves was a thought that Rousseau passed over rather hurriedly. . . . All struggles were between the people and something not the people, between the nation and something antinational and alien. On the one hand was the public interest, self-evident, beyond questioning by an upright man; on the other hand

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were private interests, selfish, sinister, and illegitimate. The followers of Rousseau were in no doubt which side they were on.

The American leaders did not view "the People" as a simple, solid, indivisible thing, always right, so that human beings who disagreed were somehow non-people. On the contrary, Madison was particularly wary of "the people" in their guise as the majority, and of what they might do to those who disagreed. That was a main reason he became the chief sponsor of the Bill of Rights.

The American leaders did not set about "unmasking the enemies of the country," as Robespierre and St. Just did. What the key Americans—Madison in particular—did in 1789 was the opposite. They set about bringing their opponents into the fold.

The initiation of the Bill of Rights in the summer of '89 was exactly that (among other things): a device to satisfy "the minds of well meaning opponents" of the Constitution. Madison wanted "the doubting part of the population" to know that "those who have been friendly to the adoption of this constitution" are "as sincerely devoted to liberty" as those who opposed it. While the explosions that rocked Europe were erupting in Paris, Madison was plugging away in New York, trying to get his 59 colleagues in the first House of Representatives to attend to his proposed list of rights.

On August 24 the House sent its version of the amendments, still resembling Madison's original proposals, to the Senate, and the two houses bounced the proposals back and forth until the Senate agreed to the conference report on September 25, which is another of the dates celebrated as the anniversary of the Bill of Rights.

Congress requested that the "President of the United States," as it had been agreed to call that official, transmit the proposed amendments to the governors of the states, in order that the governors might submit them to the state legislatures. Then came some further bouncing until the legislature of the tenth state—Virginia, fittingly—ratified ten of the 12 proposed amendments more than two years later.

There were some important changes as these proposed amendments passed from Madison's hand on June 8, 1789, through the complicated processes of the House, the Senate, the conference committee, and the state legislatures into the Constitution of the United States on December 15, 1791. But I believe one can say that all these accumulated choices and refinements put together were not as important as those that Madison had made in the first place, sitting alone at his desk in New York, with the amendments suggested by state ratifying conventions before him, picking, omitting, choosing, editing, adding. He left out amendments that were likely to be seriously controversial because, as he scribbled in his notes for his June 8 speech, enactment required "passage by 2/3 of congs. and 3/4 of Sts." He left out most of the technical amendments. And, of course, he left out amendments that were in effect efforts to fight the ratification battle all over again by emasculating the new federal government—such as the amendment Patrick Henry most wanted, which would have removed the direct taxing power.

Madison proposed to weave the amendments into the body of the Constitution, but the House, wisely, made them attachments rather than sprinkled insertions. Questions of form aside, not everything Madison proposed would make it. He proposed to put a 100-word philosophical statement at the beginning of the whole Constitution—a preamble to the preamble—that would have echoed the Declaration of Independence (in somewhat less graceful language), declaring that all power rests in and derives from the people. This idea was dropped early in the debate in the House, more as a matter of a literary than political judgment: it was already clear that "We the people" was an incomparable lead. Madison also proposed an amendment specifying the separation of powers; this one too got dropped in congressional deliberations.

What has become known as Madison's "lost amendment"—taken out by the Senate on September 7—would have protected the freedom of the press, the equal rights of conscience, and trial by jury in criminal cases "against the states," as lawyers say, where Madison particularly felt they needed to be protected. This would have anticipated the 14th Amendment and its 20th-century interpretation. Madison's provision that "no person religiously scrupulous of bearing arms shall be compelled to render military service in person" would have given religiously grounded conscientious objection the status of a constitutional right, and would have created some ingenious jurisprudential argumentation in our own time about what religion is. Even so, what James Madison proposed is mostly what we have today, and mostly in his language—or rather the language he borrowed from the states.

Many of the proposals that came to Madison's desk, by way of the recommendations of the state ratifying conventions, had been grounded in colonial experience. You have a right to be "secure," as the Fourth Amendment says, in your person, house, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures—like when the British customs agents ripped open your trunks and boxes, and invaded your house or boat to see whether you were smuggling anything. Your premises and effects are not to be invaded without a warrant—and it can't be some "general" warrant or writ of assistance, like those James Otis spoke against in 1761. It has to be a specific warrant. The American colonials, particularly in Boston and New York, had reason to specify the right (laid down in the Third Amendment) not to have soldiers quartered in one's house. As for the rights of the accused that are protected in the later articles, today it is mostly criminal lawyers, their clients, and writers of courtroom dramas who focus on them. One can picture a creative writing class requiring each student to outline a movie script derived from a different provision: unreasonable searches and seizures, double jeopardy, excessive bail, cruel and un-

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usual punishment, trial by jury, a speedy trial, indictment by grand jury, a public trial, the right to have a lawyer, the right to be informed of charges and confront accusers. But these were not just plot devices for the first-generation republicans who shaped the American government. They identified with the accused sufficiently to feel deeply about these protections. Many of them knew what it was to be the accused, to be treated unfairly in the courts, to suffer from the high-handedness of the royal administration. (In those days, the people forced these protections on the elite. Now that a giant middle-class democracy has grown on these foundations, the broad populace, across the barriers of class and race, no longer identifies as clearly with the accused. Today, one might almost say, the situation is reversed: the elite forces these protections on the people.)

In the most important provision of the later amendments, the provision that the powers that be may not deprive you of "life, liberty, or property," Madison made what has proved to be an enormously important choice from the terms that were available. He quarried a phrase from New York's long and rambling list of recommended amendments: "without due process of law." That phrase moved the protection up a notch. Now something more than bare-bones legality was required: a *process* of law, which includes the care and protection afforded by fair and formal procedures, meeting a criterion of "due-ness." Here as throughout the American Bill of Rights the principle of restraint upon government was introduced *within* government—again, something the other revolutionaries across the water seemed not very good at.

The most important rights and liberties of all were collected by the Senate into one amendment, which, when the winnowing by the ratifications was complete, became the First Amendment. When James Madison first proposed these items on June 8 they had come in three separate paragraphs. Madison's original draft of the one on religious freedom said that "the Civil rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief or worship, nor shall any national religion be established . . ." and included another clause, which got dropped by the Senate: ". . . nor shall the full and equal rights of conscience be in any manner, or on any pretext, infringed." This last was Madison shaking his fist—not just rights but full and equal rights, to be protected not just from abridgement but abridgement in any manner, on any pretext; and conscience at the root of the entire structure.

The other two Madisonian paragraphs that were to become the First Amendment went like this:

> The people shall not be deprived or abridged of their right to speak, to write, or to publish their sentiments; and the freedom of the press, as one of the great bulwarks of liberty, shall be inviolable.
>
> The people shall not be restrained from peaceably assembling and consulting for their common good; nor from applying to the legislature by petitions, or remonstrances for redress of their grievances.

Madison made the subject of the sentence not, as in the version that became our First Amendment, "Congress," which is abjured to make no law abridging these rights, but rather "the people," who shall not be deprived of them. That beginning, and the slightly fuller elaboration of the rights we call free speech and free press—the people's "right to speak, to write, or to publish their sentiments"—gives the guarantee a coherence, a clear link to the process of public argument, and a solid location in the people as the agent to whom these rights are assured. Madison gave the freedom of the press—in the context of these *people's* rights—an extra emphasis with his description of it as "one of the great bulwarks of liberty." ("Bulwark" was one of the Founders' favorite words for these protections; "palladium" was another.) And peaceful assembly is given a reason and a purpose: "consulting for the common good."

Madison's sentences have the advantage over the First Amendment into which they were squeezed, philosophically if not legally, of a little more space and a few more words, which are able therefore to convey, as the terse phrases of the First Amendment may not, the civic and communal as well as the personal aspect of these most fundamental of all liberties, their interconnection, their location in "the people," and their role in the great tournament of reason by which a republic was to conduct its life. But the formula adopted by the Senate—"Congress shall make no law . . ."—had the advantage of directly restricting the holders of power, those who might be most tempted, and most able, to menace the people's rights.

What happened then? The American Revolutionaries did not proceed to cut off each other's heads on the glorious guillotine or to kill each other in glorious purges. If they had lived in the age of the photograph it would not have been necessary for them to keep airbrushing out of the group pictures those revolutionaries who later lost political struggles. Two of the greatest collaborators from the earliest days of the American Revolution, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, both of whom returned from Europe in 1789 to take part in the new government, later bitterly opposed each other. But they did not lead insurgent forces or banish each other to the hills of Kentucky or have each other liquidated. They lived on through each other's depredations and settled down in old age to a renewed correspondence—full of reminiscences but also full of ideas, pounding away still on thoughts about government. They were able to live long enough to astonish their countrymen by dying, both of them, with breathtaking symbolic audacity, on July 4, 1826, the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

In 1836, ten years later, eager patriots tried to persuade James Madison to round out that miracle. He was 86 years old and failing, and they wanted him to take stimulants to keep himself alive until the 60th anniversary of the Fourth. But the modest Madison, never strong on *gloire*, said no thanks and died a week early. •

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The Global Zeitgeist Checklist: Japan

1. NUMERO UNO ✓

Politics. Thanks to the endless Recruit influence-buying scandal, a Mr. Sosuke Uno is the new prime minister. Major qualification: the Recruit Co. didn't consider him important enough to bribe. Also, he has lots of (low-profile) government experience. And he's amiable and inoffensive, too—a kind of Eastern Gerald Ford, save that he has no constitutional authority to pardon any allegedly crooked members of his party. So far the betting is that he faces an uphill battle to attain historical footnote status.

2. DIET OF WORMS ✓

Parliamentary housecleaning. You thought Jim Wright was slow to take a hint. Noboru Takeshita—perhaps the most unpopular prime minister in postwar history—has no intention of leaving the Diet now that he's given up his PM job. Yasuhiro Nakasone, Takeshita's predecessor and a key suspect in the Recruit case, is planning to stick around, too. On the rare occasion when a parliamentarian *does* leave, his progeny linger on: 40 percent of Takeshita's Cabinet was composed of second-generation politicians, and the succession hasn't sent them scurrying to sign up for retraining programs.

3. THE GREAT BARRIER GRIEF ✓

Trade. America formally calls Japan an unfair trading partner. The man in the street here is having trouble getting indignant about the three kinds of products his government is accused of denying him. Supercomputers, space satellites, and forest products do not engage consumer concern the way beef, oranges, and autos do. Japanese households have no need for the first two items (not yet anyway), and what do Americans mean by forest products—*Time*, *Newsweek*, or Kleenex? Suspicion runs high that the hit list was devised for internal U.S. consumption.

4. THE THREE PERCENT NONSOLUTION ✓

Revenue enhancement. Displeasure continues over a three percent consumption tax touted as a major reform. It doesn't deal with existing tax inequities and it invites abuse; in Japan concealing income is a more popular sport than sumo. Although two-thirds of all businesses are exempt from assessing the tax, more than a few are expected to do so anyway and not pass it on to the government. Consumers don't like carrying around aluminum one yen coins, for which one Tokyo department store has introduced a handy container in the shape of a human waste product.

5. HELLO, YOU MUST BE GOING ✓

Illegal workers. 14,300 of them were deported last year, but an estimated 70,000 to 100,000 still remain. That's a good-sized headache for a society not noted for putting out the welcome mat for wretched refuse. Nonetheless, there's a growing awareness that letting in poor Asians in a controlled, orderly manner helps many labor-short industries and serves to defuse accusations of xenophobia.

6. THE AFTER-CLASS STRUGGLE ✓

Students. Pundits wonder: What's wrong with these kids today? As college students in China and Korea regularly mount anti-government demonstrations, their lethargic Japanese counterparts can't—or don't want to—organize even a street corner rally. And look at all the windows of opportunity: political corruption, a discovery that an H-bomb had been accidentally unloaded off Japan's coast by much-resented American overlords, etc. It wasn't always like this: from the early '60s to the late '70s, student activists chalked up these accomplishments: forcing the cancellation of a trip here by a U.S. president; closing the country's most prestigious university for over a year; turning Tokyo's new international airport into a battlefield; and massively demonstrating against a war (Vietnam) that no one was even asking them to fight. Corrupting affluence and heightened competition for admission to good schools are conventionally blamed for the new docility.

7. STAND AND DELIVER ✓

The service sector. Busy Japanese (an average of 500 more hours per year on the job than the French or Germans) are becoming what one magazine calls "*konbiniensu jyankii*," or convenience junkies. Sounds familiar, but the Japanese have already leapfrogged the United States in convenience technology. Also brought to your door here: comic books and pet crematoria. One company provides people who will stand in line to buy government-operated lottery tickets, pray at an appropriate shrine for your numbers to come up, and then deliver your earnings. (You pay for the prayers even if they don't work.)

8. THE RAIL THING ✓

The "bullet train." Twenty-five years old this year and now as clichéd a symbol of the country as Mt. Fuji and geisha. No big celebrations are planned, in keeping with the national preference for observing failures rather than accomplishments. (Witness the lavish lachrymose ceremonies marking the end of WWII.) One unintended consequence of trying to make outlying areas more accessible is that with Tokyo only a day away, regional economic centers have diminished in importance. Still, the train is deserving of tribute: it's punctual, travels at 260 kilometers per hour, and has never had a major mishap—and, perhaps most remarkable, almost no one considers any of this remarkable.

9. SLIPPING DISCS ✓

Music. America's most profitable worldwide export industry after aerospace is entertainment—just try getting seats at a Tokyo showing of a Tom Cruise film. But the American share of the prerecorded music market is plummeting. On the other hand, many of the top-selling releases by domestic performers are recorded in the United States with American studio musicians. Having repulsed the barbarians by collaborating with them, local bands remain resolutely non-expansionist. Anyone who doesn't find this the best news on the checklist has never heard a Japanese-language version of "Whole Lotta Love."

JAMES BAILEY

James Bailey is a free-lance writer living in Tokyo.

The Zeitgeist Checklist is a creation of Charles Paul Freund.

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Boys' Lives

The title **Dead Poets Society** (Touchstone) comes from the name of a group of boarding-school boys who meet secretly at night in a cave and read aloud from great writers. They have taken this idea from their English teacher who was in such a group when he was a student at the school. (A salute to the filmmakers for using this eccentric, attractive title.)

The time is 1959. This explains, or justifies, the fact that there is no nonwhite face and no non-Anglo-Saxon name in the film. This school is in Vermont. (The film was actually shot in Delaware—the first feature to be shot in Delaware, if that's of interest even in Delaware.) The school, which aches to be English, is 100 years old and prides itself, of course, on its antique traditions. A new teacher challenges some of those traditions, especially those of hidebound teaching, because of passion for his subject and concern for his students. He knows especially well what he is daring: he is an alumnus.

He is witty, humane, unconventional. He irritates the rest of the faculty, but he sets out to win and stimulate the boys and does both. Those who know Jean Vigo's *Zéro de conduite* (1933) will recognize the configuration. If Vigo had wanted to beef up his film from its 44 minutes into a feature, he might have used some of the plot strands in *Dead Poets Society*. One of the boys applies character lessons learned from his teacher in pursuit of a seemingly hopeless love. Another boy risks head-on conflict with his stern father about a choice of career. The teacher has opened an ambition in the boy, which the father means to block.

Nothing about this film sounds, as described, novel. Yet it grips, because it has been made with plentiful feeling, vigor, belief. Tom Schulman wrote the screenplay apparently out of a sense of indebtedness to a teacher of his own. We have all had at least one teacher like him—someone who fractures the die-cast role of teacher and seems a person with a life outside the classroom, who teaches as much out of that life as out of texts. The ending of the film, though a touch contrived, contrasts the two types of teacher, with victory going where we expect it to go.

Peter Weir, the Australian who made *Gallipoli* and *The Last Wave* and *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, among others, directed with a keen eye. Weir can be sententious, as in the films above, but American settings bring out the best in him. His most moving previous film was *Witness*, set in the Amish country of Pennsylvania; now in Vermont (all right, Delaware) he again works in close, with heat and tenderness and no pomp. He's somewhat overfond of symbols—flocks of starlings or wild ducks, the members of the Society slowly disappearing in a mist—but he makes us as eager to see what will happen next as he seemingly is.

Weir is helped immensely by John Seale, the cinematographer who did *Witness* and, lately, *Rain Man*. Seale shoots the seasons of the year like archetypal statements, and he gets the most out of corridors and cloisters in this neo-Gothic school.

But the film depends on the teacher, and Robin Williams plays him almost to the hilt. Williams has had trouble with straight roles (e.g., *The World According to Garp*) because he is much more a performer than an actor, specializing in stream of consciousness on fast-forward. There is no place for that specialty here. Still, the teacher he plays is a conscious performer, and Williams very nearly makes us forget that he is one, too. With his tight bright face like an expensive piece of polished leather goods, he bustles into every moment with appetite. (One negative aid: he has no love scenes to play in this film.)

Kurtwood Smith, whom I first became aware of as the DA in *True Believer*, does the stern father with chilling force and surgical technique. Where has Smith been all these years? Norman Lloyd plays the crusty old head of the school with all the John Houseman authority he can muster. It's a difficult role because it's full of unavoidably predictable responses; Lloyd does his best to register a whole man. The boys, in their middle teens, are all adequate and are all empathetically handled by Weir.

Dead Poets Society, affecting though it is, benefits from context. American

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Chocolat. *Childhood in French colonial Africa, remembered by a young Frenchwoman who returns. Autobiography related with subtlety, strength, quietness. (Reviewed 4/17/89)* **How to Get Ahead in Advertising.** *Bruce Robinson, of* Withnail and I, *wrote and directed. Richard E. Grant, who was Withnail, is superb in this flawed but glittering satire of the advertising world. (6/5/89)* **Lawrence of Arabia.** *An ecumenical film.* Anyone *can enjoy it. Twice. See it on a large screen while you can. (2/20/89)* **Little Vera.** *Frankness about the current disaffection of Soviet youth. Sensitive acting and directing, unsparing candor about the conditions of family life. (5/1/89)* **—SK**

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films of the past few months have been so dreary that a good new American film seems a special blessing. When the preview finished, many in the large audience applauded. I felt that, among other things, they were offering thanks for being spared another *Pink Cadillac* or *Criminal Law* or *Cold Feet* or *Vampire's Kiss*.

Kung Fu Master (Expanded Entertainment) is the name of a video arcade game to which a Parisian boy is addicted. The film was written and directed by Agnes Varda, the artist who made *Vagabond*. Because of that wondrous work, this one is surprising.

The original story is by Jane Birkin, the Anglo-French actress who plays the lead. (Varda has done a documentary about Birkin, unseen by me.) The screenplay concerns a 40-year-old Anglo-French woman who lives in Paris, separated from her husband, who works at a free-lance design job and is raising her two daughters. The woman falls in love with a 15-year-old boy who is her older daughter's schoolmate. We don't actually see them make love, but it's implied; we do see plenty of anguish and kissing.

As with Louis Malle's *Murmur of the Heart*, which is about mother-son incest, this film "prepares" very hard. We are shown lots of Birkin's decency and tenderness beforehand, through her devotion to children. (Both of them are played by Birkin's own daughters.) The family coziness is laid on as a background of normality for the oddities to come.

Among the oddities is the fact that the boy is played by Mathieu Demy, son of Varda and Jacques Demy. To imagine some of the scenes being rehearsed is somehow more odd than watching those finished scenes on screen because in rehearsals the boy's mother was actively involved in instructing her son. It all puts some strain on our mature, very worldly acceptance of *tout*.

This is not to argue that the woman-boy situation has never happened. But the air with which it is treated here, a blend of poesy and tolerance, makes it vaguely freaky. At one point the woman asks: "Do all women fall in love with boys or only those with no son?" A tempting answer: only if they are in French films.

Birkin, all arms and legs and horsey face, plugs hard at *la vie parisienne*, with hugs and openness and rue. Varda directs with her usual unusual visual power. The video game that the boy plays is a test of alertness in the face of continuous threats, and it's probably meant to be symbolic of the story. The symbol falters. The picture seems more a refusal to be fazed by its subject than anything else. •

SEXUAL SCIENCE

Consuming Desire

Sexual Science and the Emergence of a Culture of Abundance, 1871–1914

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Edward Rothstein on Music

Heart of Gould

During the second movement in Glenn Gould's recording of Bach's Clavier Concerto no. 7, there is a series of trills. A trill is just a quick movement back and forth between a tone and its neighbor. Even in the best of hands, it is no more than a decoration, an ornament. A trill sustains a note, keeping its melodic strength alive, drawing attention to its continued presence.

But Gould's trill is something else. The movement back and forth between two notes that most keyboard players turn into a shimmer here becomes a rocking. The rocking changes in speed and intensity. It takes on a rhythm that instead of simply reinforcing the music's pulse plays with it, propelling and teasing, stretching and pulling. Gould's trill does not emphasize a note at all, it emphasizes the spaces between the notes. His trills direct and suspend musical space and time.

I risk turning a trivial moment into something portentous, but that is only because when Gould played Bach there was hardly a trivial moment. Of course, willful eccentricity and deliberate provocation often went along with his extraordinary technique, the crystalline independence of melodic lines, the rhythmic exuberance, the subtle structural articulations. But this trill is evidence of the sort of power that suffused all his playing, even the most outrageous renditions of Mozart piano sonatas. Of all the pianists I have heard, Gould had the keenest sense that music occurs not in the tones themselves but in the spaces between them. He seemed constitutionally unable to play two notes without feeling them as part of a gesture in musical space.

This is why Gould can sustain a line at a tempo so slow it would splinter under most pianists' hands. It is why his playing of Webern and Schoenberg can be as poignant and translucent as his articulation of a Bach fugue. It is also why he sat so low at the keyboard, his face hovering just over the keys, one hand conducting the other's playing, ecstatically and uncontrollably humming or singing the gestures his hands were spinning out in sound. The playing of the piano, Gould explained, was not a matter of vertical action of the hands, but of horizontal movement between the keys. In this ambition Gould was solidly in the mainstream of piano philosophy; but in his execution of his ambition he was hardly in the mainstream of anything.

It is now nearly seven years since Gould died suddenly of a stroke at the age of 50, and the loss still seems beyond reckoning. This might seem a radically strong statement about someone who was, after all, an interpretive artist, not a composer, and one who caused not a little controversy over what many saw as his whimsical and perverse approaches to music. But among the many remarkable things about Glenn Gould is that opinions about his achievement are so drastically opposed; they are nearly reduced to fundamental notions of musical belief.

Many still believe that he was a great talent tragically led astray by his baroque personality and exotic neuroses. The gloves and scarf in summer, the soaking of hands, the pills for every manner of physical and mental ailment, the battered 14-inch-high piano chair, the weird mannerisms at the keyboard, the bizarre retirement from public performance at the age of 31 with a proclamation that the concert was dead: "eccentric" seems an adjective bonded to Gould. There was the lawsuit against the piano technician who Gould claimed had nearly crippled him by what some witnesses saw as a friendly clap on the back. There were the critical proclamations like "Mozart died too late rather than too early." There were his suggestions that an ideal Barbra Streisand album should include songs by Dowland and Bach and Mussorgsky, that Beethoven was overrated, that art should destroy itself, etc., etc.

What was one to make of a brilliant pianist who made his debut recording in 1955 with Bach's Goldberg Variations (a recording that has never been out of print), who went on to an extravagantly successful concert career in the late 1950s and early 1960s, who then simply dropped out? What was one to think of his subsequent career, holed up in a room in Toronto, sleeping all day, popping pills, calling friends after midnight, laboriously splicing together his recordings out of multiple takes? Who can blame the skeptics?

But Gould often spoke of the intimate relationship between player and listener made possible through recordings. It is that relationship—personal and impassioned—that his admirers claim. What draws them, as much as the beauty of his sound or the intoxicating power of the music, is an expectation of something resembling revelation, some glimpse of transcendental truth. There is a sense of secrets being revealed by Gould, something private being shared, in sharp contrast to a musical culture in which marketing and performance are primary values. The mystery of the man and the artist who could elicit such a response—and its opposite—remains. But in the closing years of the 20th century, Gould's musical achievement is likely to become more, not less, important; his recordings are likely to become more precious as recordings themselves become more common.

This makes Otto Friedrich's biography of Gould, *Glenn Gould: A Life and Variations* (Random House, 441 pp., $24.95), all the more disappointing. Despite its surface competence and its dutiful coverage of career markers, there is little light shed below the surface, and almost no useful discussion of musical issues. This is the first biography written with access to Gould's papers; but at the end—after unrestricted access to "72 meters of shelves" of papers, 80 recorded interviews, 2,000 pages of transcripts—little is added to our understanding of Gould as person, pianist, or writer.

Gould's mother, for example, was his sole piano teacher for many years, but Friedrich gives no sense of the approach she took with her son. Gould's father, a furrier, is still alive—he was even interviewed—but he remains a cipher, oddly stiff and formal. Even the speculation about Gould's own character seems stilted. Gould seemingly lived a monkish existence. Yet there was, apparently, an affair with a musician's wife. So what, exactly, was the nature of Gould's sexuality?

There is no answer given, and more important speculations are never even attempted. Gould's very approach to music itself was immensely physical. He couldn't sit still while playing, and a listener can have a hard time sitting still while listening, so potent was Gould's sense of gesture and pulse. That physicality was never seductive (as it could be with Arthur Rubinstein) or sexually driven (as in some of Vladimir Horowitz's performances). Yet Gould loved the spun-out desires of Tristan: once he began playing that work in his own piano transcription, we are told, there was no stopping him.

When it comes to music, Friedrich's views are often mislearned pieties. Beethoven's last piano sonata, Opus 111, is called "one of those grand statements of

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heroic purpose, like the Fifth Symphony and the Emperor Concerto." But the sonata is not from Beethoven's "heroic period," nor does it share much with either of those works that are. Friedrich discusses Renaissance music as if it were just a sort of folk music. He refers to Liszt's transcriptions of Beethoven symphonies as "almost laughable." He even takes Gould's denigration of the Goldberg Variations in one interview—a typically "naughty" Gould proclamation—at face value.

The most significant revelation in the book is a journal that documented a crisis in Gould's playing in the late 1970s. It interests Friedrich primarily for medical reasons. (He gave it to doctors to evaluate for its physiological and psychological elements.) Yet the musical significance of the few fragments Friedrich quotes are fascinating. Gould was having trouble playing, noticing "uneven and uncontrolled," "unbalanced" and "insecure" playing. No stranger to neurosis, Gould wondered whether there was a "psychological" source of these failings. But he treated them as physical problems.

Gould, whose hypochondria knew no limits, didn't bring in medical consultants, take pills, try different therapies. This was a problem in another realm: it was pianistic, something private, personal, the object of determined labors. The remaking of his body was a project for him, an attempt to reconstruct an interior image of sound and play. He engaged in nightly struggles with his keyboard demons.

This was how Gould developed his style in the first place—ending all lessons at the age of 20 and withdrawing into near isolation for several years, accompanied by a tape recorder, refining and redefining his approach to the piano. His technique, with its burnished tone, was totally individual; anybody imitating his posture would create a dull, faceless sound. Gould's solutions to the problems of turning an instrument played by impact into one that sang was to struggle for a continuity of musical and mental and physical movement. The hands, judging from videotapes of Gould playing, do not strike, they grip the keys in passing, almost pulling the sound from their surfaces.

But during this crisis, it is as if all his early labors were being undone. Gould's posture at the instrument, his wrist position, the way in which his finger muscles were used, the placing of knuckles and joints—these again became matters of extraordinary calculation. In the midst of his struggles there were moments of hope, like gasps for air:

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

> Suddenly, last night, I determined that *the* common denominator in *all* these problems . . . was the lack of *constancy* in shoulder elevation. For one brief moment, and only in r-h [right hand] I *had* it; that gleaming lustrous sound was back and I realized more than ever, that *that* was the sound of control . . .

But then the problems recur: "nothing has worked." The journal continues without resolution, with only intermittent solutions, breaking off, finally, with Gould giving accounts of "disastrous" playing of Bach and Ruggles and Krenek. We do not know, in fact, whether he ever solved these problems, or whether the increasing use of the editing studio was an attempt to conquer them technologically.

In fact, Gould's isolation and the determination, the scrupulous attention to sound and image, are almost frightening to read about, even in Friedrich's fragments. This episode was not the exception. Gould attempted, again and again, to make something new of himself and his playing. He had an almost obsessive drive to remake, possess, control. This is what inspired him to ignore a composer's explicit requests about tempo and phrasing; but it is also what made his musical achievements possible.

Gould was so self-conscious about the nature of his musical project that solitude itself became a subject for his solitary labors. One of Gould's most cherished projects after his departure from concert life was a series of radio documentaries he called "The Solitude Trilogy." Each documentary dealt with cultures and character in isolation, removed from society by choice or chance. The most important was called "The Idea of North," which presented the musings of travelers to the Canadian arctic, their voices spliced by Gould to compose something that has been called "contrapuntal radio." Running under the sound of often three or four voices talking at once, describing the effects of isolation and risk, was an ostinato bass line of a train clacking along the tracks, heading north to Fort Churchill.

In "The Idea of North" the frozen tundra of Canada is turned into an allegorical region. Travelers into arctic solitude argue over the effects of isolation and hardship. "Any person who makes the trip," a surveyor narrator says of the journey north, "is up against himself." "There's such a thing as being a hermit by choice," says another voice, who could be referring to Gould himself. "Are you answering a challenge or escaping from yourself?"

This question was never answered by Gould, who knew that he was doing both. He knew, too, that his peculiar path was fraught with risks. "The biggest danger of all," says one character of northern

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solitude, "is getting lost." The person dwelling in the north is "kind of odd. You get a kind of cult of personality. . . . You get people with a built-up style, a front. You come to believe in your own role." With his fingerless gloves, overcoat, and scarf in the middle of the summer, Gould dressed the part. Musically too, Gould was drawn to the Nordic: to scrupulous counterpoint or interiorized landscape, to Sweelinck and Sibelius.

But what prevented his "getting lost" was something more serious and fundamental: an impassioned and obsessive concern with a certain kind of musical experience that was opposed to what he called the "tyrannical" force of the "Zeitgeist." That tyranny did not just require a pianist to tour concert halls around the world playing the same compositions again and again in a setting Gould considered vaudevillian. It incorporated a way of listening and playing as well. The player had to attempt to reach the last row of the balcony with his sound and gestures while creating a performance that would work once and possibly only once.

Gould's move "north" was to the recording studio, where at night he journeyed through strange seas of thought we can only imagine, constructing performances in isolation that were more coherent and concentrated and compelling than any given in a concert hall. He understood that a record was a distinct form of musical presentation; it did not have to be a "record" of a particular performance, but could be constructed the way a movie is, out of fragments of recorded moments. By the end of his life, Gould was spending eight minutes playing the piano for every hour in the recording studio. The objective was to create a performance specifically meant to be played again and again.

This is, to a certain extent, the objective of every record producer; but most limit their sights to a notion of "definitive" performance, one that gets the phrasing and expression and notes "right" for a given performer at a given time. Gould believed that the function of a record was to present a dissenting view; the only reason for creating a record was to create a distinct musical universe. If Bach's first prelude in the "Well Tempered Clavier" had traditionally been treated as a wash of arpeggiated chords, Gould would make the work not chordal, but almost contrapuntal, splitting the patterns into detached phrases. If Brahms's First Piano Concerto had been treated as a heroic pianistic drama, Gould would turn it into an orchestral one, making his voice one among many.

This sort of opposition to accumulated manners and traditions had, of course, its aura of fetishism. Gould was well aware that one of the distinguishing features of our musical age is that the music written in our time is not part of our time. This contributes to the "tyranny" of performance culture; it also contributes to the "tyranny" of idiosyncrasy Gould was sometimes prey to as he devoted himself to interpretation. For a pianist not actively involved in new music, there was nothing else to do but reinterpret; for a pianist like Gould that meant to reinterpret differently.

But this was not a naive iconoclasm. Gould wrote that he had a "century-long blind spot" in his own musical taste, demarcated by the Art of the Fugue on the one hand and Tristan on the other. This precisely demarcates the heart of our public musical culture: out goes Mozart, the classical style, the Romantic love of melody, the culture of virtuosity, the development of the concert and the maturing of the piano itself. What was left on one side of the boundary was the music of Bach—above all, Bach—and of such earlier composers as Orlando Gibbons. This is not fundamentally public music at all. Bach's keyboard music is often private, idiosyncratic, his counterpoint creating a musical space that had no foreground or background. It is all foreground, a musical universe that is at once selfless and filled with ego, like the playing of Gould.

On the other side of the boundary was the music of late Romanticism. This music—particularly of Richard Strauss, but also of the Viennese modernists—was music of "spacial" complexity, in which, again, music was not mere melody and accompaniment, but full of intricate inner relations; it would be impossible to treat any of this music as primarily "thematic." And like the playing of Gould, it possessed a character of knowing melancholy, expansive and withdrawn at the same time. These boundaries of taste did not mean Gould couldn't be compellingly articulate about the music of Haydn and (some) Beethoven, but he tended to treat the classical style as an intoxicating combination of Baroque contrapuntal lines and late Romantic brooding.

Gould knew, I think, that his rejection of the mainstream culture, with its accumulated manners and its methods of performance, was itself a theatrical participation in the world he was rejecting. He became a radical ironist, mocking himself along with that world. In creating, for example, a cadenza for a recording of Beethoven's First Piano Concerto he deliberately went against the grain of the classical style, writing a sort of late-Romantic fugal escapade. Gould claimed to be discarding the whole concerto ethos, with its notion of putting the pianist on display in opposition to the orchestra, yet in his individuality and perversity he ended up restoring it. I think Gould knew this; I think it even amused him that his journey north was a public journey, not a private one, that his solitude was a matter of public proclamation as well.

In a recording celebrating the 25th anniversary of his debut, Gould actually produced a miniature drama called "The Hysteric Return." It mocks the concert occasion, alluding in particular to Vladimir Horowitz's return to public performance at the very moment Gould was leaving it ("An Historic Return" was the recording of Horowitz's 1965 Carnegie Hall recital). But it even turns the pose of Gould's opposition into an ironic jest. Byron Rossiter, a Canadian radio broadcaster, is the news commentator for Gould's return to concert life. The scene, we are told, is the antarctic drilling platform XB-67, where Gould's pianos are set up in the frigid weather. Gould, wearing an "inflatable scarf," plays his transcription of Ravel's "Valse"—a concert piece that did not particularly warm Gould's heart. The distinguished sponsors of this live broadcast concert—the Board of Directors of Geyser Petroleum—hastily evacuate the platform at the conclusion of the work as the winds pick up, leaving the virtuoso alone on deck. Seals bark their acclaim, flapping their flippers. Gould is heard saying, all too sincerely, "Thank you, thank you, thank you very much," as the antarctic winds howl.

In this scene of Gould surrounded by ice, the wind whipping around him and his instruments, there is something not just crazy but exhilarating. Gould often spoke about ecstasy—a matter of being lifted out, stepping away—as a musical goal. Ecstasy is communal in its creation of expansive feeling; isolating in that it is an ultimately private sensation. His vision of ecstasy involved both intoxication and distance, submersion and detachment. In his best work, Gould kept these two seemingly contradictory spirits in balance. In his solitude he was a melancholic ecstatic.

If I listen carefully to his playing I hear something sad, more than sad—heartbreaking. It is there in the late Brahms performances that have the sense of whispered nocturnal musings, as well as in a remarkable disc of perfor-

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mances recorded in Moscow in 1957 (distributed by Harmonia Mundi), which treats Webern's Variations like an elegy and Bach's Art of the Fugue theme like a meditation occurring at the edge of consciousness. The intensity of the playing often becomes overwhelming, as if there were more latent in the music itself than could be safely borne.

In one of Gould's most virtuosic pieces of writing—a portrait of Leopold Stokowski—he describes how in interviewing Stokowski he tried to break through the conductor's armored manners and practiced answers. "Maestro," he said to the aged conductor,

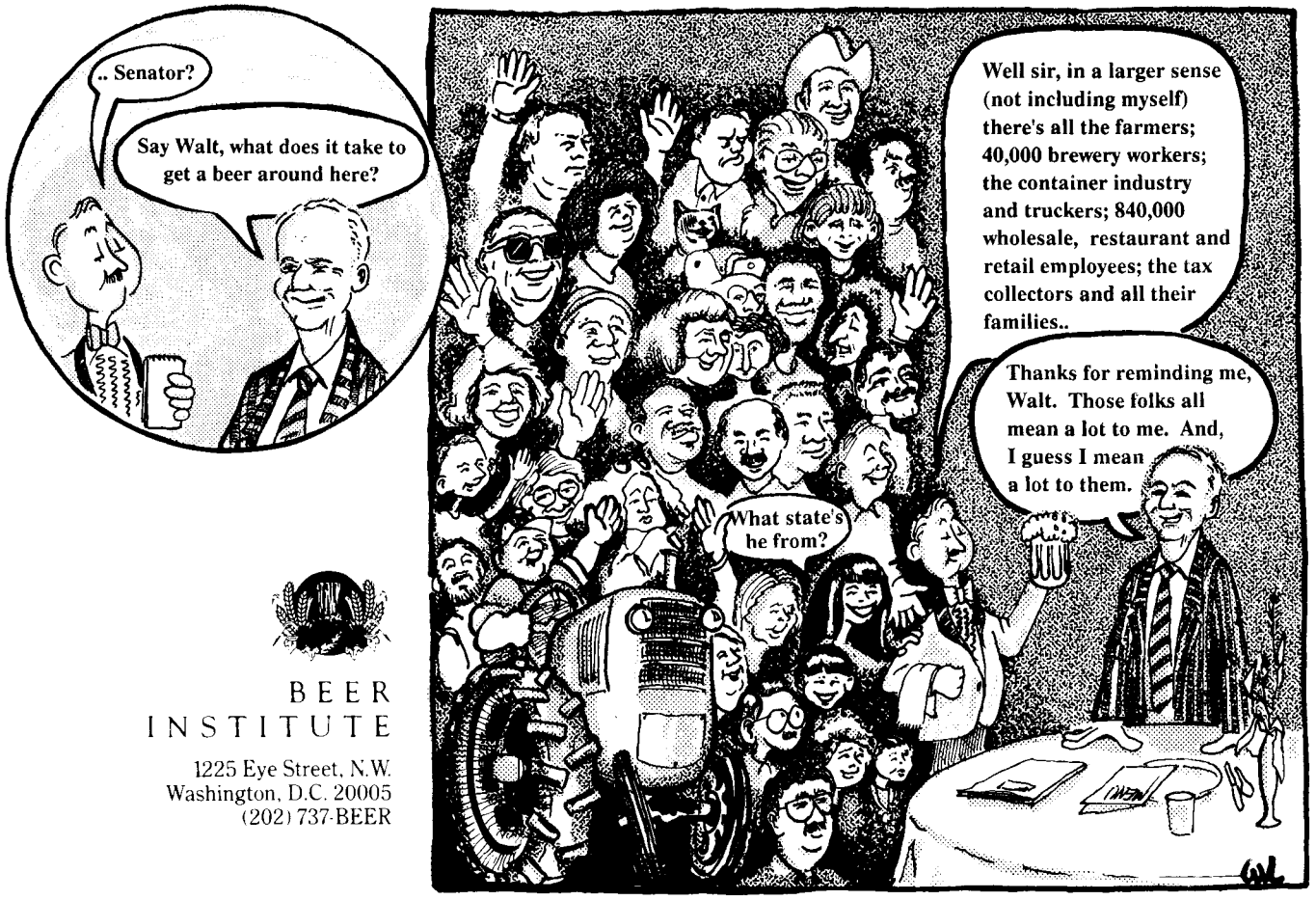
> I have this recurring dream. In it, I appear to be on some other planet, perhaps in some other solar system, and at first, it seems as though I am the only Earthman there. And I have a tremendous sense of exhilaration because I seem to believe, in the dream, that I have been given the opportunity—and the authority—to impart my value systems to whatever form of life there might be on that planet; I have the feeling that I can create a whole planetary value system in my own image. In any event, my dream always ends badly. I usually sight some other Earthman on this planet and realize that I am not alone. . . . But now let us suppose that . . . we could transport you to such a planet and give you the power that I do not have in my dream; and let us suppose also that, on this planet, there is a race of highly developed beings who, to all appearances, have achieved . . . a state of civilization higher than our own—and have done this, moreover, without reference to the notion we call 'art.'"

"Firstly," Gould asked, "would you want them to know about the artistic manifestations of our world? And secondly, if you did, how much would you want them to know?"

It is a question Gould no doubt asked himself. If he had the powers he offered to Stokowski—if Gould had been granted this fantasy in which his nightmare was overturned, in which he really possessed the solitude and power and authority that he struggled for in this earthly universe with so much pain and energy—I think he would have chosen a most remarkable course. He would have, I think, offered not Bach's keyboard works, or Strauss's operas, or any other work; he would have offered only silence, unwilling to disrupt the measured enlightenment of this highly developed race.

Gould asked the question because he had the answer: art was too dangerous. Art, Gould wrote elsewhere, is "potentially destructive." He called himself, after Santayana, "the last puritan," because he held, at least at times, just such severe views. He said of puritan societies that "to be an artist was to put oneself needlessly in the way of damnation," that an artist "would inevitably be exposed to a plethora of dark and troubled thoughts and be compelled to deal with them in such quantity, to represent them with such facility, and to project them with such vitality that one would almost surely in the end be seduced by them."

I think he found, in his own playing, this peculiar and corrupting power. It frightened him, this intensity of feeling, and frightened him too that there seemed in the web of musical connections spun out in solitude not just ecstasy but a threat of something that was not social or moral at all. He opposed, intellectually, the divisive quality of art, its power to differentiate, separate, and then intoxicate. I think that at times Gould would have wished his greatest performances to dissolve themselves, that they undo their willful "sinfulness." Wasn't this the nature of those labors at all hours of the night in his recording studio, cutting his playing into pieces and trying to weave them into some statement so integrated and controlled that the music's power could finally turn truly moral?


.. Senator?
Say Walt, what does it take to get a beer around here?
Well sir, in a larger sense (not including myself) there's all the farmers; 40,000 brewery workers; the container industry and truckers; 840,000 wholesale, restaurant and retail employees; the tax collectors and all their families..
Thanks for reminding me, Walt. Those folks all mean a lot to me. And, I guess I mean a lot to them.
What state's he from?

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For Gould always hoped that something else was possible. He wrote about the puritan views of his grandmother, who, like him, feared art's sinfulness: "Given exceptional circumstances, impeccable character, and always assuming that vigilant attention which alone holds the forces of darkness at bay, the rarest of artists might indeed be capable of a spiritual transfiguration." Can anyone listen to his playing and not hear the yearning for just such transfiguration or feel in the idiosyncrasies of his genius some hint of what Keats called the "egotistical sublime"?

In one essay, Gould wrote of his childhood memories of church: "They have to do with Sunday evening services, with evening light filtered through stained-glass windows and with ministers who concluded their benediction with the phrase: 'Lord, give us the peace that the earth cannot give.' " Gould said he didn't go to church much anymore; he was living, after all, behind other stained-glass windows, devoted in solitude to the risk and possibilities of his art. But, he continued, "I do repeat that phrase to myself very often—the one about the peace that the earth cannot give—and I find it a great comfort." Finally, even music could not give what the earth did not, but there was still comfort to be found. Gould repeated that phrase, again and again, in his playing.

Greek Plots

BY WILLIAM H. MCNEILL

The Salonika Bay Murder: Cold War Politics and the Polk Affair by Edmund L. Keeley

(Princeton University Press, 396 pp., $24.95)

In May 1948 the body of George Polk, a CBS reporter, was found floating in Salonika Bay, in Greece. His hands and feet were tied together, and he had been shot through the head. Immediately the murder became the focus of a heated political debate in a country situated on the very knife-edge between newly drawn Russian and American spheres of influence, where Communists and other leftists and a mixed bag of "rightists" were fighting a bitter civil war.

Who killed George Polk? The answer to that question seemed to involve the interests and the policies of the U.S. government, which had promised, just 14 months before, to help the Greek government to defeat the Communist insurgency. By May 1948 substantial American aid had begun to arrive in Greece; and American advisers had begun to tell Greek soldiers and officials what they had to do to win the war, and to keep American aid flowing.

What made Polk's murder especially significant was that he left behind a letter to Edward R. Murrow, in which he explained that he hoped to visit Gen. Markos Vafiades, commander of the guerrilla forces, and put him "on the air." Polk continued: "I've offered to let them write the script on every word Markos says while I'll just give him cues and do the translating."

Visiting guerrilla headquarters, of course, was contrary to military security regulations promulgated by the Greek army. It also displeased American officials in Greece, who were trying to strengthen the still shaky authority of the Greek government. Yet many American correspondents distrusted the Greek government and wished to hear what the other side had to say. Most were unwilling to run the risk; but a few weeks after Polk's body was pulled from the water, Homer Bigart of the *Herald Tribune* actually got the story that Polk had been after. To the chagrin of American and Greek officials, he reached Markos's headquarters from Yugoslavia, and then walked across the lines into Greek government territory.

Greek government officials were entirely determined to find Communist agents guilty of Polk's murder. They feared that if the crime were brought home to the right, American support for the Greek government would be brought seriously into question. Yet on the face of it, the Communists had no motive to prevent a correspondent from getting their point of view across to the American public, as Polk was proposing to do. Moreover, it is easy to imagine that someone on the right might have felt that the ignorant and presumptuous American correspondent, so eager to aid and abet Communist treason against "Hellenism," deserved to be taught a lesson.

This was obvious enough at the time. Polk's wife, and a good many American and Greek journalists, assumed initially that the murderer was trying to prevent Polk from reaching Communist headquarters. The suspicion that the Greek authorities would not pursue leads pointing toward suspects on the right was acute; and partly for that reason, a group of distinguished American journalists formed a special "Lippmann Committee" to check up on the case. The committee chose William J. ("Wild Bill") Donovan as their representative and legal counsel. Formerly the head of the OSS, the wartime secret intelligence service of the United States, Donovan had retired to private law practice, and undertook the Polk assignment as a public duty, serving without fee. He arrived in Greece with his own special investigator, a Greek-American OSS veteran who had been with the ELAS guerrillas during the war, and was familiar with the leftist cause.

Edmund Keeley's book explores in painstaking detail how Greek and American authorities reacted to the Polk affair. His paraphrases and quotations from official documents go over the same ground time and again, and sometimes read more like a legal indictment than like a history. The text is strewn with a vast number of Greek proper names that will be utterly unfamiliar to ordinary Americans. This is not, therefore, an easy book to read. But the book develops a dramatic power as a result of Keeley's "progressive sense of outrage" against the actions of American authorities who wanted a speedy trial that would find someone guilty of Polk's murder, and preferred to pin the crime on Communists.

Keeley shows how Donovan's investigating agent, after some contretemps with Greek officials and American diplomats, came up with a list of suspects that included a Reuters stringer named Gregory Staktopoulos, whose capacity to speak English distinguished him from most other Greek newspapermen in Salonika. Since Polk spoke no Greek, this made Staktopoulos a plausible go-between for getting to General Markos's headquarters. On top of that, Staktopoulos had a tangled political past: he had been associated with Germans as well as with Communists during the war. In 1948 he was a reporter for *Makedonia*, the most respectable newspaper of Salonika, but also had a British connection through Reuters; and like many other newspapermen he probably supple-

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mented his income by offering intelligence information to anyone who would pay him for it.

According to Keeley's reconstruction, Greek authorities arrested, and in due season convicted, Staktopoulos of complicity in Polk's murder on the strength of a confession extracted under torture; but they did so only after Donovan had picked him out as the most likely suspect, and had instructed the chief Greek investigator to "concentrate" attention on him. Keeley is willing to grant that American authorities may not have known that Staktopoulos confessed under torture. Still, he finds their failure to inquire into Greek police practices, and their evident satisfaction with the official solution of the case, completely inexcusable.

The guilt for a farcical trial and a false conviction, Keeley believes, rested squarely upon Americans. He rather excuses the Greeks involved, on the ground that they acted under American provocation, but he also implies the more snooty notion that the Greeks were not really blameworthy since Greek morals and public tradition condoned such acts in a way that American morals and public tradition did not—or, at least, should not. He recounts how the Lippmann Committee and American journalists at large concurred in accepting Staktopoulos's confession as a solution for the crime. The book concludes with an account of how the official version of events gradually came apart after 1960 when Staktopoulos was released from prison and Greek journalists began to turn up new bits of evidence, and to explore improbabilities of the trial.

I admire, without entirely sharing, Keeley's righteous indignation. He shows beyond all reasonable doubt that Staktopoulos's confession was largely, perhaps even completely, false. And yet lying was something of an art form in war-torn Greece, and Staktopoulos was good at it. His courtroom performance carried conviction at the time, even to some quite skeptical observers; yet, as Keeley shows, it cannot have been true. What Staktopoulos had to say in 1984 when he published a book about how he had been tortured by the police may not have been true, either. Indeed, it struck me as no more plausible than his courtroom confession. Perhaps he was the sort of man who bends with the wind and likes the limelight. At any rate, it is a fact that what he said in court in 1949 and what he wrote in 1984 accorded each time with the dearest wishes of the ruling party in Greece. Power had shifted, and discrediting the right was almost as urgent a matter for the Greek government in 1984 as discrediting the left had been in 1949. Staktopoulos served both purposes with considerable virtuosity, and, I suspect, at the expense of truth on both occasions.

Donovan's choice of Staktopoulos as the most plausible suspect was not groundless. The certainty of Staktopoulos's innocence is less than Keeley's account suggests. The climate of deception in which these events took place makes it quite impossible to reconstruct what really happened to George Polk. Despite all the ink spilt on the case, nobody can say who killed Polk, or why.

What Keeley underplays is the climate of the times. I lived through those times myself, and knew personally several of the main actors on the American side whom Keeley finds so guilty; and I once shared the general point of view that inspired their behavior. Shortcomings of American officials that Keeley so deplores may be explained by the fact that American personnel in Greece moved within a narrow social circle and heard only one version of Greek events. Such a limitation of experience is certain, over time, to distort one's consciousness. In retrospect, it is clear that the Communist Party's decision to resort to renewed armed conflict in Greece was not taken with Stalin's approval, and it was not part of a Russian plan to conquer the world. But it seemed so at the time—not only because Greeks of the right proclaimed it, but also because Greek Communists deliberately hid their differences with other Communist Parties and Communist leaders.

Eventually, it became clear to me that the thrust behind the renewed guerrilla activity came from young men and boys of the mountain villages in Greece whose families needed food from outside to survive. Under the chaotic economic conditions of 1942-50, the mountain villagers could get food from the plains only at the point of a gun; and they would have done so with or without the ideological sanction provided by the Communist Party of Greece. Still, it was only when I left the sheltering circle of the American Embassy, and actually visited two guerrilla bands as a private person, that I managed to see what was really happening in the country. Until then I accepted the notion, more or less at face value, that an international Communist conspiracy was at work in Greece.

Some 11 months before Polk was murdered, I was a member of a journalistic team that traveled widely in Greece, gathering material for a book published by the Twentieth Century Fund in 1948 under the title *Report on the Greeks*. On two occasions we entered guerrilla-held ar-

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eas, and spent enough time there to find out a little about the kind of people who were carrying arms against the government in the early months of 1947, and to guess their motivation.

In both localities, the guerrillas were local boys, some very young. In one Macedonian village, we met only two ragged representatives of the guerrilla army: raw youths who were stationed away from home in an alien village that was not wholly sympathetic to their cause. They were quite uncertain how to respond to American strangers, and sent away for instructions. But no response came from headquarters, so they decided to treat us as honored guests; and in due season they allowed us to leave, but only after ordering the young people of the village to assemble and sing for us.

In Mount Pelion, Thessaly, we spent the night with an organized band. Its leader was a veteran of the wartime resistance and a stranger to the village, and the political commissar was a handsome city youth who had graduated from secondary school. But the rank and file were all local boys who had left their homes to carry guns and camp out on the mountain that rose behind their native village. Their village was a village of shepherds. It owned almost no cultivated land. Yet enough food to satisfy the members of the band was delivered at dawn. It had been collected surreptitiously from several neighboring villages out in the plain, despite the fact that all the villages were ostensibly under the control of the Greek army, which patrolled by day but abandoned the open country at night. A double regime prevailed in the villages: guerrillas ruled by night and the army of the Greek government by day.

Thus the villages of the plain, where food surpluses were in fact available in a time when all normal trade had broken down, were, in effect, paying a tax in kind to the guerrillas. Conversely, by taking arms and espousing the Communist cause, the young men of the poor shepherd village were able to live at the expense of richer agricultural villages. They also could be heroes in their own eyes, and escaped idleness at home since the flocks of sheep, which they might normally have tended, had all been destroyed during the war.

Two observations seem worth making about the situation that prevailed. First, almost everyone in rural Greece had regular contacts with both sides, and a great many urban-dwellers were in the same ambivalent circumstance; a similar dual regime had existed under the Germans. As long as disruptions of the economy meant that a significant number of mountain villagers were unable to feed themselves throughout the year, the push toward armed insurgency was irresistible. National tradition sanctified such behavior, for robber bands of *klephts* had played a prominent role in the Greek war of national liberation between 1821 and 1830. Ideology was indispensable for making robbery and coercion respectable; and any old ideology would do, so long as it was patriotic. The young boys whom we met scarcely cared about the supposed goals and the grievances of the Communist guerrilla movement.

Second, in 1946-48 no one was sure who would win. The Germans had come and gone, and the social dynamic that impelled hungry mountain villages to supply manpower for guerrilla bands had outlasted them. The Americans might also prove to be ephemeral. A prudent person tried to keep out of trouble and have friends in both camps. Only a few firebrands risked life and limb by espousing one side to the exclusion of the other; and even some of the most fanatical were careful to keep backdoors secretly open, in case of need.

Whom could one trust? Where did the best chance of safety lie? How could one keep what one had, or get what one needed for survival? These were harsh and all but universal problems. The standard Greek answer was to trust close relatives and nobody else. Deceiving outsiders was perfectly acceptable, universally expected, and, when it was successful, widely admired. Under such circumstances, an investigation into the killing of George Polk was unlikely to succeed in discovering the truth. The authorities had to find someone guilty, and of course they did. But the actual involvement of the chosen victim in the crime was, and remains, uncertain.

American officials can perhaps be forgiven a little of their neglect of due process in Staktopoulos's case. It genuinely seemed like a time when a resolute, concerted effort to stop the advance of communism in Greece was what mattered. To look too closely into how anti-Communist Greeks went about the business of finding the guilty party in Polk's death seemed impolitic and unwise, particularly since the Greek prosecutors were so eager to follow the lead that Donovan had given them in the case.

Instead of bringing Americans to the bar of eternal justice, as Keeley tends to do, it would be more accurate, more historical, to see them as men and women caught in the tangle of the times, as victims of their own misunderstandings, still trying, within their individual limits, to do what they sincerely believed was best for their country and the world. The same was true of American correspondents, and, I am fully prepared to believe, of Donovan himself. The Salonika Bay affair looks to me like a story about human fallibility and human error, not an exhibition of moral delinquency. Edmund Keeley feels otherwise, presumably because he has a higher opinion of what American officials are, or of what they ought to be, than I do.

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Embalming

You'll need a corpse, your own or someone else's.
You'll need a certain distance; the less you care
about your corpse the better. Light should be
unforgiving, so as to lend a literal
aspect to your project. Flesh should be putty;
each hair of the brows, each lash, a pencil mark.

If the skeleton is intact, its shape may
suggest beginnings of a structure, though even here
modification might occur; heavier
tools are waiting in the drawer, as well as wire,
varied lengths and thicknesses of doweling.
Odd hollows may be filled with bundled towel.

As for the fluids, arrange them on the cart
in a pleasing manner. I prefer we speak
of *ointments*. This notion of one's anointing
will help distract you from a simpler story
of your handiwork. Those people in the parlor
made requests, remember? Don't be concerned.

Whatever this was to them, it is all yours now.
The clay of your creation lies before you,
invites your hand. Becoming anxious? That's good.
You should be a little anxious. You're ready.
Hold the knife as you would a quill, hardly at all.
See the first line before you cross it, and draw.

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The Joy of Texts

BY DENIS DONOGHUE

The Pleasures of Reading in an Ideological Age by Robert Alter

(Simon and Schuster, 250 pp., $18.95)

Robert Alter's aim in this splendid book is "not merely to question a few of the fundamentally misleading dogmas of the new critical sectarians but to propose a set of concepts that will point toward a return to reading." This is a book, he says, "about the *language* of literature and how it provides rich pleasures for readers." He defines literary language as "an intricate, inventively designed vehicle for setting the mind in restless pleasing motion, which in the best of cases may give us a kind of experiential knowledge relevant to our lives outside reading." Alter not only speaks up for the distinctive pleasures of reading poems, plays, and novels; he shows, by attentive recourse to many passages from English, American, and French literature, how rich and diverse these pleasures can be.

Literary critics find it hard to talk about pleasure, not because they are sad sacks by avocation, but because the traditions in which pleasure is a crucial consideration have come under suspicion. The two obvious traditions are aestheticism and hedonism. Aestheticism, in Walter Pater or in Wallace Stevens, is often and falsely taken to require that the reader step aside from life in order to relish its fruits; it is easy to represent aestheticism, therefore, as morally and spiritually irresponsible. Hedonism, too, is often and falsely alleged to be inconsistent with a serious purpose, as if going to the ballet or the opera were a sign of decadence.

But Alter also faces a more acute difficulty: the terminology of pleasure has not recovered from the experience of being appropriated by Roland Barthes. In *The Pleasure of the Text*, Barthes famously distinguished between *plaisir* in reading and *jouissance* in reading, roughly translated as pleasure and bliss. The distinction was based on differences in sexual pleasure. *Plaisir* is married love, committed to fidelity and service. *Jouissance* is promiscuous, bisexual play, free of guilt and responsibility, inventive and utopian. According to *plaisir*, one reads devotedly to discover the meaning of the book in hand, and the book seems to require that fidelity. According to *jouissance*, one reads to be playful, experimental, heuristic, provoked by the book, pleasured by it.

Alter does not allow himself to be led into Barthes's erotica. The distinctive pleasure of reading a good poem or a good novel, for Alter, is like watching a great actor on the stage giving a consummate performance. In literature, the actor is language. But not language in any abstract sense. In Robert Frost's "Once by the Pacific," for instance, the American language is performing itself, discovering certain possibilities within itself and enacting them: "Great waves looked over others coming in, / And thought of doing something to the shore / That water never did to land before." What Alter calls Frost's "expressive vagueness" is achieved here by letting colloquial diction do whatever it can with an apocalyptic theme, the destruction of the world. The vagueness, as in "something" and later "someone," makes a space for a pervasive conviction of menace at large. Frost has found this space within the language, guided to it, I think, by certain passages in Emerson and Mark Twain.

Communication is not offended or insulted, but it is not allowed to set unreasonable limits on the serious play between the words, or on the freedom this discovers. A discovery in language is a discovery in life. Alter is especially gifted in recognizing the work and play of a language. He accepts that there is a Kleenex way with language, as Kenneth Burke calls it, in which we use words merely for the occasion and then throw them away. But in the literary way of language, the words are invoked with a sense of intricacy, of manifold relations, echoes, the call of syllable to syllable.

Alter's boldest claim is that we can identify "intrinsically literary values" and see them operating in a poem, play, or novel to make little worlds, featuring "the nice interplay between the verbal aesthetic form and the complex meanings conveyed." He furthers the claim by writing interlinked chapters on fundamental issues: character, style, allusion, structure, perspective, and meaning. In his discussion of character, for example, he argues that if we endorse the conception of narrative "as a system of structural mechanisms," we can only see character as a function of plot. Many theorists of narrative, he maintains, "have scarcely any critical vocabulary for encompassing the mimetic dimension of character." Alter refuses to be intimidated by arguments against the concepts of character and verisimilitude, common to Structuralism and post-Structuralism. He maintains that a sense of the conventions at work in literature is entirely compatible with an equally alert sense of the way things are in life: "If someone in a novel runs a fever of 104 degrees farenheit, verisimilitude has been observed; if the fever is 114 degrees farenheit, verisimilitude has been violated." Alter knows, of course, that in the latter case we don't stop reading the book. We ask, rather, what the refusal of verisimilitude entails.

The discussion of style is Burkean in the definition of style as "a summoning of the resources of language to convey the precise nuance of attitude and concept the writer desires and also an orchestration of those very resources that is repeatedly felt to be in fine excess of the occasion of communication." Style involves "the purposeful dislocation of ordinary language" because it engages in a play of mind among words, far beyond the referential aim of ordinary language. I have some doubts about this. Ordinary language, looked at closely, often turns out to be more elaborate and more figurative than one would expect. It's difficult to enforce a theory of style as deviation: the norm may not be as normative as we want it to be. Besides, what norm have we in mind? Is it the "gibberish of the vulgate" that we hear in the streets, or some ideal version of discursive prose? I don't know how a "control" could be established.

Alter's chapter on allusion is one of the most exhilarating parts of his book, a lively account of the ways in which writers make a virtue out of the necessity of building on earlier works. He thinks that the reader is supposed to spot the allusion, like movie buffs who spot allusions to Eisenstein in Brian de Palma. But even if you don't get the allusion, you may be affected by it unconsciously. Or it may be enough if you sense that something is being echoed in what you're reading, even though you can't say what.

Alter's knowledge of literature in several languages is so vast that reading, for him, must be like entering an echo-chamber. His account of the allusions to the King James version of Isaiah 40:6

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("all flesh is grass") in George Herbert's "Church Monuments" is especially illuminating, and there are commentaries nearly as good in every chapter. On the questions of structure and perspective—which is a wider concept than the Jamesian "post of observation" or point of view—Alter is equally convincing. He is not interested in structure as a universal shape, sequence, or paradigm, but as "something immanent in the particular text," the "cluster of ideas and feelings, represented figures, situations, and relations that are the 'subject' of the text" and are given "coherent definition through formal design."

The most challenging of all is a chapter called "Multiple Readings and the Bog of Indeterminacy." Alter agrees with other critics that there is no single or official meaning to be found in a text or ascribed to it. "The rule of thumb for literary texts," he says, "is that as a matter of principle other readings are always possible." But he doesn't accept that, this being the case, anything goes. It may be impossible to show that a particular interpretation of a poem is the right one; but *some* interpretations can be shown to be wrong. The simplest form of this demonstration arises in the case of translation. If a passage from the Hebrew Bible is interpreted, and the whole interpretation hinges on a mistranslation of a crucial word or phrase, it is time to cry "stinking fish."

Within the range of plausible differences, Alter argues that what we find, say, in a poem depends to a large extent on the nature of our interests. We see what our interests urge us to see. Nobody's reading of a poem is neutral or disinterested. An interpretation is a statement of the relation, on the occasion of a particular reading, between the interests of a reader and the words on the page. This relation is all the better for being flexible: it should be, otherwise the reader's interests couldn't be changed, whatever they encounter. But the interpretation is not a detachable or otherwise objective meaning; it merely evinces a relation that may then be judged for its cogency.

When J. Hillis Miller reads the works of Pater (my instance, not Alter's), he fastens on the motif of the head of Medusa and pursues it across several books. After further meditation, he moves to suggest a "partial portrait" of Pater, on the provocation of this motif. It is unlikely that any other reader would see Medusa's head as such a salient image in Pater, or if he did, that he would pursue it in Miller's way. Miller's reading of Pater can't be shown to be either right or wrong; it is an exemplification of his interests in their engagement with a body of writings called, for convenience, "Walter Pater." A reader of Miller's essay either finds it cogent or not.

Alter remains undismayed by talk of indeterminacy, as well he may, considering that his particular ways of reading yield him such authentic pleasure. What he conveys most strongly is his love of literature, his responsiveness to its dances of form and texture. He has read, so far as I can gather, pretty nearly everything, but he has not subsumed literature under any formula. He remains alive to the next surprise of phrase and form. Reading is a privileged pleasure, he says,

> because each of us enjoys it, quite complexly, in ways not replicable by anyone else. But there is enough structured common ground in the text itself so that we can talk to each other, even sometimes persuade each other, about what we read; and that many-voiced conversation, with which, thankfully, we shall never have done, is one of the most gratifying responses to literary creation, second only to reading itself.

But someone might say that surely we have always known this, why say it now? Alter doesn't spend many pages moaning over the dismal conditions of reading and teaching, but he thinks the situation is bad if not dire. As teachers, we are providing a grim setting for what should be the pleasure of recognition and discrimination. It is commonly assumed that in putting behind us the work of the American New Critics—Brooks and Warren, Allen Tate, John Crowe Ransom, Kenneth Burke, and R. P. Blackmur—we have taken possession of their attributes. We claim to have gone far beyond their skills of "close reading."

The claim is fraudulent. Our students can't read, and we are failing to teach them. They can't do anything with a novel except reduce it to an idea or a "position"; can't do anything with a poem except extract a concept from it and declare the concept to be the meaning of the poem. The ability to read, in the sense of construing or interpreting or following the play of the words in a poem or a novel, is now so rare as to constitute an abnormality.

I assume that this is partly what Alter has in mind by calling our time "ideological." He isn't using the word in the commonplace sense, to claim that intellectuals are now in an especially quarrelsome mood. I think he means that intellectual life, these days, has congealed; it has become a matter of stating positions, of holding to them, and of making academic careers by the rhetoric of identification and reiteration. We are teaching our students to produce an identifiable routine and to get it known by repetition. We are not teaching them to read, in the sense of submitting themselves to the discipline of words on the page.

For the moment, it is harder than usual to show students what form an interest in literature, as distinct from the theory of literature, might take. It is difficult to indicate what Wordsworth meant when he said, in the Preface of 1815, that the figurative capacity in language is exerted by the poetic imagination not to evade the responsibility of literal reference, but "for its own gratification." What, in the detail of a particular poem, does that gratification consist in?

By comparison, theory is a fairly easy activity, even though it gives itself the air of difficulty. If critical theory were the fulfillment of an engagement with literature rather than a substitute for that engagement, it would be a fine culmination. But most of our theorists seem to have given up on literature, or stopped liking it. "A whole generation of professional students of literature have turned away from reading," Alter remarks:

> I strongly suspect that many young people now earning undergraduate degrees in English or French at our most prestigious institutions have read two or three pages of Lacan, Derrida, Foucault, and Kristeva for every page of George Eliot or Stendhal.

He thinks, too, that many literary scholars "don't particularly care for literature." Many of them—perhaps I should say, many of us—seem to be preoccupied with our own dogmas and with devices to enforce them: hence the sectarianism to which Alter refers. To the argument that literature, or what is accounted literature at a given time, is "a reflection in any society of the values of the ruling class, abetted by a learned or priestly elite," Alter answers that, on the contrary, "the literary imagination develops a momentum of its own, in indifference or in actual contravention to reigning ideology." As Kenneth Burke put it many years ago in his *Counter-Statement*: the law of the imagination is "when in Rome, do as the Greeks."

But I shouldn't give the impression that Alter is in despair. He hopes to improve the situation by encouraging people to read literature, and to take lightly the theoretical excruciations foisted upon them by theorists. We are not only in "an ideological age" but in a skeptical one. The best answer to such a predicament is Alter's: to show what we're missing in literature if we're dyspeptic about it or lugubrious about the scruples that

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may be attached to it. Literature is far more various than the theories we insist on applying to it. Granted that if I haven't a theory I'm likely to accept someone else's. Still, the price we pay for any theory is that we can do nothing but apply it, time after time, text after text. Soon we become enslaved to our systems.

We are all gifted in the deployment of what Blackmur called "techniques of trouble," devices for bringing trouble on ourselves. My own suggestion for a trouble-free zone of reading would be: let's give up using the word "meaning" or worrying about not using it. Or rather: let us take the poem—Burke again—as a symbolic action. Read it as an action, a trajectory of a certain force, energy, desire. The words of the poem perform it as a dance of attitudes and values. A poem is not a container for meanings. Nor does it have a meaning in the sense that an orange, mostly pith, has juice as its finer element.

Instead of worrying the meaning of a poem, we should consider how it works, what the words do, how they lean and hearken to one another. Pater said that the arts aspire toward the condition of music, but I think there is a more useful analogy than music. We are bodies that learn language. Learning to speak is partly the imitation of others, partly invention thereafter. Learning to read is like learning to understand how a dance goes, following the lines of the dancers' bodies, their sequences, partnerings, and partings. This is my analogy, not Alter's, but I don't think he would take drastic exception to it. It is compatible, at any rate, with everything he says about sequences and spirals in his superb commentary on Emily Dickinson's "After Great Pain."

Poets are choreographers. In a dance, the dancers' bodies, their physical constitution, its possibilities and constraints, resist the totalizing ambition of form, and come to terms with it by a compromise. In language, the corresponding compromise is the tension, never fully resolved, between feeling and form, reference and invention; between words dogged by every semantic and historical relation they have come through, and the same words with their appearance of freedom and weightlessness. Reading a poem is like watching a ballet and enjoying it the more for divining, haltingly but increasingly, what is going on.

DENIS DONOGHUE holds the Henry James Chair of English and American Letters at New York University. His most recent book is *England, Their England: Commentaries on English Language and Literature* (Knopf).

'Destructive Generation': An Exchange

Panthers, contras, and other wars

The Church of Radicalism administers a harsh communion and has no patience with apostates. We knew this before and discovered it again when we published *Destructive Generation*. The book is not a plea for grace, but an attempt to understand the varieties of religious experience that characterized the Movement in its heyday and among its hard-core; to understand what went wrong with the 1960s left, what responsibility people like ourselves bear, and how the faith of leftism has been kept going in our own time despite an unrelieved record of disaster.

In writing *Destructive Generation*, of course, we expected to be excommunicated from the church of the left yet again. But this time, in addition to being shown the exit sign at the gates of Eden, we found ourselves stigmatized as something even worse than anti-left. We were anti-1960s! In writing about the decade, we had stumbled into the nostalgia factory where the touch-up artists of radical history work with airbrushes to erase unpleasant memories and smooth out rough moments. We had seen the smithy where the myths of this golden age are forged; myths intended to restore the power of the radical dream and to make sure that our present political culture doesn't learn from its history so that it will be condemned to repeat it.

Of these myths about the 1960s, the first and most pernicious is the doctrine of original innocence. This holds that the left is purer of heart and therefore better—more compassionate, idealistic, peace-loving, and humane—than all other political beliefs. To remanufacture this innocence, defenders of 1960s radicalism must now propose that groups such as the Black Panther Party and the Weatherman terrorists—groups of which we had enough firsthand knowledge to write about them plausibly in *Destructive Generation*—were nothing more than a lunatic fringe that had only minuscule support 20 years ago and have no legitimate standing as historical metaphors today. There might have been excesses back then—justifications of "revolutionary violence," a fashion for zany neo-Marxist creeds. But those involved in such things were part of what university administrators once called "a small but vociferous minority"—a minority that gets smaller with each passing year as yesterday's leftists pop out of their cocoons and take wing as today's progressives.

"It wasn't us, babe," these fluttering revisionists say today. We were not violent. You might have been, but not us. We were not proponents of revolution or even radical change. Of course, somebody did it. Since you admit in your book that these things took place, you are guilty. Such is the fate of those who use the second-person plural as part of the grammar of collective responsibility.

For us, there is an irony in being called the last New Left extremists. Having actually drawn back from the 1960s left during its heaviest weather, we thought that when this book appeared we might be criticized by remnants of the hard-core as being inauthentic. Where were you when we were getting ready for the armed revolution? we imagined them asking. But we obviously misjudged the strength of the historical rewrite now under way. Our old comrades have pointed the finger instead of clenching the fist. "You guys were part of the lunatic fringe then and you're part of it now," they have said of us. "You've just exchanged one radicalism for another while the rest of us have been integrating ourselves back into society and getting on with our lives." Or, as TNR senior editor Hendrik Hertzberg complained to us in a recent conversation, "You were apologists for communism then and you are apologists for anti-communism now." (As if these postures were morally equivalent.)

Tom Hayden, Bobby Seale, and all the other quick-change artists of the left have a right to get on with their lives. But they have no right to deface the truth of the 1960s to ease their midlife transits. Yet one looks in vain in Hayden's autobiography, *Reunion*, for any serious admission of complicity in the North Vietnamese rape of South Vietnam. Or for any illumination on the year or so he spent perpetually out of breath from trying to inflate the revolutionary legend of the Black Panthers as "America's Viet Cong." Or for any mention of his experiences in the hills of Northern California doing target practice under the tutelage of the minister of defense of the "Red

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Family" in giddy anticipation of the fascism he thought Richard Nixon might install, thus giving a little goose to the revolution that had then entered a period of dry labor.

Hayden was no worse than many at the time. But he is no better now because he has decided to subtract these facts from his own life and from the history of the Movement in the interests of getting on with it. This lack of second thoughts is the telltale heart of the American left.

Why no reckoning? Because reckonings are conservative. They counsel against the heedless rush to try to redeem the ambiguous and mottled realities of the human condition. They prove that life is made better only incrementally and with great difficulty, but it is made worse—much worse—very easily. Reckonings examine the toxic waste revolutionary enthusiasms leave in their wake. Reckonings open the mass graves to examine the shards of bone that are all that is left of the New Men and Women created by utopias past.

Because they want to continue their crusades, our old comrades not only don't want second thoughts of their own, but they don't want us to have them either. They not only want to protect their sense of moral superiority as a special generation formed by a crucial decade, but also keep that decade inviolate so that some future radical generation can use it as a model when it decides to pull the sword from the stone.

A second myth of 1960s nostalgia artists is that "we" were actually more sinned against than sinning. In fact, "we" never really "knew sin" at all (to use Todd Gitlin's phrase) until the end of the decade when the unending war had blunted our moral affect and driven us into a state of temporary insanity.

In the battle between memory and forgetting, this is an example not only of amnesia but of auto-lobotomy. The New Left bit the apple the first time the first journalist thrust the first microphone into its face and told it that it was a prophetic minority. It knew sin early in the 1960s in the founding sessions of SDS when Hayden and others tried to propose a moral equivalence between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.; in the middle of the decade when it claimed that Ho Chi Minh was the George Washington of his country; and at the end of the decade when it transmuted the slogan "Bring the troops home" into "Bring the war home."

To serve memory means admitting that we (we radicals generically, not just we two) did not love this country enough. We did not do all we could to stop the war without hating our heritage root and branch. If we did not carry North Vietnamese flags ourselves, we

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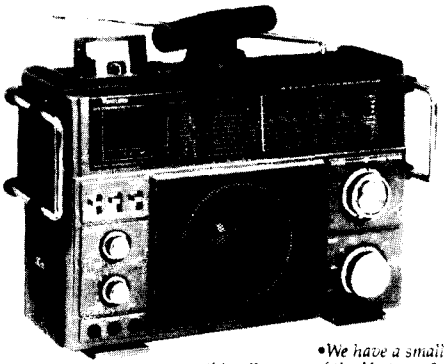

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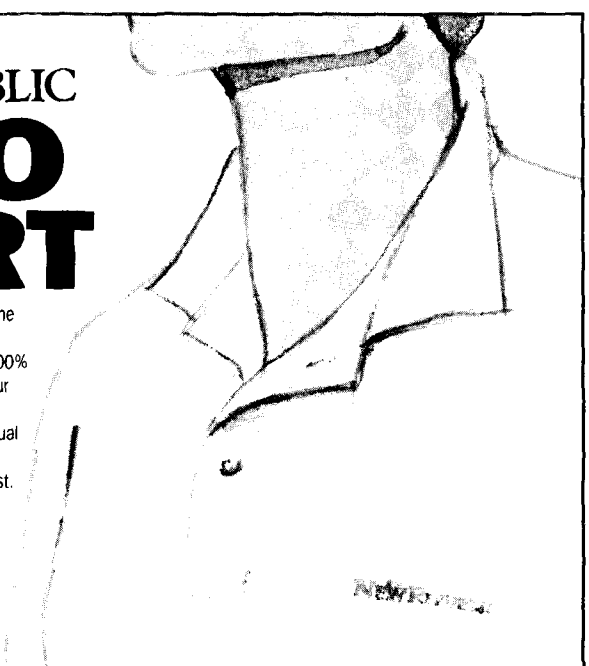

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did not face down those who did. If we did not spell Amerika with a "k" ourselves, we failed to repudiate those who did. There was enough sin to go around in the '60s, sins of omission as well as commission, sins of the heart as well as the hand.

The fault lines concerning the 1960s and the left in our culture go deep. Exactly how deep we realized when Paul Berman, who had attacked us in print on several previous occasions as "renegades" (a term of the 1930s that has outlived the Stalinist neologicians who created it), was given our book by TNR for an unusually lengthy review ("The Last New Leftists," April 24). Because our positions on issues such as the spread of totalitarianism in Central America were closer to the magazine's than those of Berman, who has vacillated between being a cheerleader for the Sandinistas and a fence sitter in the struggle over Nicaragua's future, this assignment had the feel of a political hit.

A 1986 Berman article in *Mother Jones*, magazine of the long radical exile, opens with a scene in which the author is in Managua chumming it up with Omar Cabezas, the No. 2 cop in Tomas Borge's Ministry of the Interior. It seems that he had just read Cabezas's autobiography, *Fire on the Mountain*, and was "astonished"—not by the fact that Cabezas had falsified the history of the revolution, but rather by the intoxicating discovery that "backwater Nicaragua was the world center of the New Left . . ." Proceeding from this aperçu, Berman wrote: "Elsewhere, the dream of Che led to stupid posturings. [But] in León [where Cabezas launched his Sandinista career] the dream of Che was the road to the Ministry of the Interior. Fantasy elsewhere was realism in Nicaragua."

Here is the authentic voice of the 1960s left thrown as if by ventriloquism into the present. Twenty years ago, we saw the Fidelistas as archetypal New Leftists, the ones who had done it while we pampered Americans were only fantasizing about it. Cuba having proved unpalatable, it is now the Sandinistas who have the authenticity America's radicals never achieved. There is no acknowledgment that in Cuba, Che's New Left dream led directly to Fidel's gulag. Here it might be different, Berman muses, while sitting in the headquarters of the Sandinista police state batting his eyes at another dreamer of Che's dream.

Berman typifies those intellectuals of the left who always wind up—for all their birdwalking and backtracking—on the wrong side. Determined to locate the good part of the New Left in this newest workers' paradise, he dons his Mexican wedding shirt and huaraches and wanders through Managua in pinched face concentration searching for evidence that socialism cares about people. We saw him there in the fall of 1987 and were amused by the mumbled apologies he made for having the bêtise to stay a couple of nights in the Intercontinental Hotel and by the quick dash he made every morning to breathe the heady fumes of the barrio.

It is not surprising that the whole literary repertory of leftism is on display in his attack on our book—the shameless mendacity, the fabulation of history, the brain-dwarfing moral smugness, and above all the insuperable intellectual mediocrity. Berman is not only ignorant about basic realities of the decade we write about, he is also tone-deaf to the era's complexity. This is shown by what he writes about the Black Panthers. Collier and Horowitz alone, he fatuously suggests, got an illicit thrill from these heavy dudes; only we were intrigued by their Promethean willingness to pick up the gun; only we suspended our disbelief when they said they had put the gun down in favor of serving the people. Such arrant nonsense could only come from someone who wasn't there.

The Panthers were an icon for the great mass of worshipers in the church of leftism, a larger and more joyous congregation then than now. The posters of Huey P. Newton sitting in his Zulu throne adorned the walls of hip lawyers as well as college students. Leonard Bernstein didn't invite just anyone into his living room even in those balmy days. Berman has the gall to ignore it all. Ain't nobody here but us moderates, he says; we didn't believe in no Black Panthers back then.

The truth is that it was only after the "violent" faction (which followed Eldridge Cleaver) was expelled from the party in the early 1970s that people such as ourselves who had actually remained aloof from the Panthers during their maximalist phase did get involved. And, as we point out in *Destructive Generation*, we did so because Huey Newton claimed not only to have put down the gun but to have embraced exactly the sort of community organizing and development passionately believed in by that tiny group of social democrats among whom Berman now counts himself. Like Berman and his ilk today, we wanted back then to continue to believe in the left. We were searching for a soulful socialism in the Oakland ghetto just as he now searches for it in the barrio of Managua. Of course, we were wrong 15 years ago, just as he is today. The "sane" wing of the Black Panther Party turned out to be filled with insane killers.

But if we were wrong, we were far from alone in our self-delusion, as Berman claims. About the time we became involved in the Panthers' "survival" programs, Bobby Seale came surprisingly close to being elected mayor of Oakland. In the spring of 1973, the *Nation* ran a long article explaining the change for the better that had taken place in the party. Rutgers political scientist Ross Baker assured readers that it was safe to support the Panthers once again because they had "outgrown their rhetoric."

A few months after the two of us became involved with the Panthers, Murray Kempton wrote a front-page review of Newton's *Revolutionary Suicide* in the *New York Times Book Review* that concludes with this peroration: ". . . We must hear him out because we suspect that he comes not as avenger but as healer. Here is the only visible American who has managed to arrive at the Platonic conception of himself. . . ." In a final flourish Kempton noted that Huey had run a joint seminar at Yale with Erik Erikson, using the reference to compare the Panther leader favorably to Luther and Gandhi. That was in May 1973. A few weeks later *The Briar Patch*, Kempton's own book on the "Panther 21," was published. And it was reviewed by another social democrat, Garry Wills, who served up another front-page *Times* review containing such gems about the Panthers—the Eldridge Cleaver Panthers, no less—as these: "Never, it would seem, have people threatened more and been guilty of less. . . . And in the end there is a sense of the almost incredible ability of men to find dignity in resisting the viciousness of other men—like lifting a 500-pound weight with one hand while stooped under a 1,000-pound weight kept on one's back."

The image is as awkward as many of Berman's own, but the message is clear: these noble Panthers were victims. Thus Kempton and Wills say in the liberal *New York Times* what even we, at this stage, would have thought a bit much. So our sin is not in being the only ones who enthused over the Black Panthers in 1973, but being the only ones who care to remember today the nasty things that took place back then when Huey Newton was still a fetish object for liberals and social democrats, as well as scraggly West Coast radicals.

The story we tell of the Panther Götterdämmerung, moreover, would remain trapped in the memory hole of the left if not for *Destructive Generation*. We alone have pointed out what Berman claims is obvious: that the Panthers, for all their success in blandishing liberals and social democrats, had never been anything more than a violent street gang.

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Protective of the faith, Berman bristles when we apply this term to the hard-core left as a whole. Lest we forget, however, Bonnie and Clyde ("We rob banks") were as much cult heroes in the 1960s as Huey and Eldridge were. More prototypically, Stalin had a gang that also robbed banks. SDS wound up, after elemental Trotskiosis, as a gang of terrorists called Weatherman. The Sandinistas are a gang in power; the FMLN is a gang, thus far anyhow, out of power; Castro is the last great revolutionary gangster in the Soviet bloc.

The metaphor may not be perfect, but it is apt because the gang, like the left, is ruled by power, not laws; the gang aims only to perpetuate itself; the gang uses rackets and scams to accumulate its wealth (shaking down the Oakland ghetto, or shaking down the campesinos). The gang thrives on feudalism and backwardness; and as that darkness is lifted, as we see today in the Soviet bloc, the gang's hold is threatened. Of course, criminal gangs are often candid about themselves in a way that the gangs of the left never are. Criminal gangs never say they are serving the people, for instance, or midwifing the birth of a socialist utopia.

Looking for love in all the wrong places, Berman is one of those socialist butterflies for whom the bloody and bankrupt history of socialism has no conclusive meaning. This is why he continues to travel to Managua and bring back reports that careen between agonizing reappraisal and reaffirmation of belief. This is why he misses the obvious and makes such errors as dismissing *La Prensa* as a product of U.S. foreign policy. If he were minding the shop, he would know that the newspaper's courageous publisher, Violeta Chamorro, far from withdrawing her charges that the FSLN was responsible for her husband's death (charges made to us, by the way, during an editorial luncheon at THE NEW REPUBLIC), published an article in *La Prensa* recently that repeated this accusation and called for an investigation.

At home Berman postures as an independent, if sympathetic, critic of the revolution. In Managua, however, the desire to be a communicant in the church of socialism gets the better of him. He goes to see Cabezas and talks about how the Sandinistas are the only New Leftists who made it happen. He then goes to his next appointment in the confessional of the Communist padre and poet Ernesto Cardenal, also at the Ministry of the Interior, for a talk about poetry. He is struck by Cardenal's "sweet ingenuousness." In our book we note how this sweet ingenue of the FSLN once reported to his comrades that Cuba's homosexuals were "actually happier in the concentration camps [where Fidel had placed them]. . . . A place like that where they were all together must have been almost like paradise for them." In assembling his review, Berman must have skimmed this passage.

Milan Kundera once said that leftists thrive on "totalitarian poetry" that beatifies the horrible. Apparently they get off on totalitarian poets as well. The image of someone who postures as a leftist of conscience sitting in the headquarters of the secret police and musing about art has a cognitive dissonance right out of the 1960s.

PETER COLLIER AND DAVID HOROWITZ

PAUL BERMAN replies:

I invite readers to inspect the last two paragraphs above—the ones where Collier and Horowitz have me sitting in the secret police headquarters musing about art with Ernesto Cardenal, praising the poet's "sweet ingenuousness" while shamefully blind to his idolization of Cuban communism.

This conversation never happened. I've never met Cardenal. In *Mother Jones* I discussed Cardenal's poetry, with no implication of having interviewed the man, as a way of suggesting some reservations about Sandinista ideology. The phrase "sweet ingenuousness" duly appeared. I mentioned Cardenal's poetic evocations of revolutionary triumph and commented:

> It's hard not to roll your eyes. Cardenal has idolized Cuban communism for many years. In his poems he compares communism to mystical bliss and a lover's embrace. He sees turtles copulating in the Pacific and is reminded of communism, quite as if no difficulties ever clouded his mystic red vision, and all was a matter of good intentions. How in the 1980s can a renowned poet think such things, you wonder. How can he write without recognizing even in some fleeting passage that communism too can lead to grief?
>
> Carlos Fonseca (the Sandinista founder) makes a point relevant to this in one of his last writings. . . . He takes up the question of cultural backwardness, a major topic for Nicaraguan Marxist theorists. Political backwardness, the lack of a long socialist tradition, has a positive aspect for the Sandinistas, he writes. It has spared them many a bruising faction fight over social democracy versus Leninism, Trotsky versus Stalin. And maybe this is true, maybe it explains the appealing simplicity, the sweet ingenuousness—

Collier and Horowitz's two words!—

that you see in a writer like Cardenal.

But what if the backwardness is merely backwardness? What if in Cardenal there is

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merely a strange combination of modern sensibility with a 1930s-like naïveté about dictatorship . . . ?

But that is the case.

Collier and Horowitz had the December 1986 *Mother Jones* in front of them. But it wasn't in front of their readers, and they figured what-the-hell and wrote whatever they thought sounded sufficiently devastating.

Regarding the Black Panther Party, no one has said that Panthers "had only minuscule support 20 years ago." My article took up the question of Panther popularity five years later, in 1974, at the time that Collier and Horowitz's bookkeeper was murdered. The Panthers of 1974, blossoming in Oakland, were penetrating the California power structure, as my article noted. Away from Oakland, though, the BPP had largely or totally fallen apart. The mass New Left circa 1974 was splintered into a thousand pieces, and several of those pieces were making criticisms of the authoritarianism and foolishness that had partly done in the radicalism of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Some of the criticism was indeed, to use Collier and Horowitz's disparaging word, "moderate" and social democratic. More often it was utopian and avant-garde, as per the temper of the age. The New Left of the late 1960s was accordingly excoriated, in retrospect, as elitist, unecological, unspiritual, un-Frankfurt Schoolish, unlibertarian, and, especially, heterosexist and male chauvinist.

Feminism and gay liberation had, after all, replaced Weatherpeople and Panthers as dominant tendencies of the moment. And in the feminist-influenced atmosphere of the new era, glamour slowly drained from the paramilitary party that was led by a pimp and a rapist—even if it was true, as Collier and Horowitz insist above, that the "sane" pimp and the "violent" rapist had undergone a political split, with Collier and Horowitz wisely shifting their support from the violent rapist who had been their colleague at *Ramparts* to the sane pimp (who himself—damn!—turned out to be a violent rapist).

Were there, as late as 1974, many other people, outside of Northern California, who persisted, 1969-style, in lionizing the Panthers? The authors' citations from the 1973 *New York Times Book Review* bear the distinctive marks of Collier-Horowitz research. You wouldn't know from them that Wills, reviewing Kempton's book about the New York Panther 21, said, "This does not mean that Kempton exonerates the Panthers. Some were clearly saved from more serious crime by sheer incompetence." (Nor did Kempton's review run on the cover, as they have it, but on page 35.) Even so, a lionizing urge did linger on, if no longer as a dominant trait of New Left activism. I hope my article hasn't misled anyone into thinking otherwise.

But was it Collier and Horowitz themselves who finally exposed the deception in their own propaganda, as they claim ("We alone have pointed out . . .")? No, the shattering description of the real-life Newton driving through the streets of Oakland to shake down black businessmen and rape women was written not by Collier and Horowitz but by Kate Coleman together with Paul Avery, in a celebrated article for *New Times* 11 years ago. Coleman again, in *New West* nine years ago, exposed Cleaver, too.

Collier and Horowitz's one other substantive point touches on Nicaragua, which is perhaps not a strong suit of theirs. In their book (and in a letter to the *New York Review of Books*) the authors invented a Nicaraguan opposition party called "the Popular Socialist Party," which used to be the name of the Cuban Communists but doesn't exist in Nicaragua. And in that same spirit of getting it right—the spirit that leads them to bollix the history of *La Chiquita* and Pedro Joaquín Chamorro in their book, and to get any number of names wrong, and to call Cabezas's book *Fire On the Mountain* instead of *Fire From the Mountain* above, and—but I'll stop—they take up the question of who killed Chamorro.

At a NEW REPUBLIC lunch some years ago, according to Collier and Horowitz, the widow Chamorro made "charges that the FSLN was responsible for her husband's death." But at a NEW REPUBLIC lunch a few weeks ago, Mrs. Chamorro, I am reliably informed, merely called for an investigation, regretted that the Sandinistas haven't pursued a proper one of their own, and made no accusation. Collier and Horowitz say that in Managua, Mrs. Chamorro's *La Prensa* has recently "repeated this accusation." When I telephoned *La Prensa* a spokesman told me that *La Prensa* has never accused the Sandinistas. The newspaper has instead objected to Sandinista justice and has called for an investigation—just as Mrs. Chamorro did at THE NEW REPUBLIC. But will anyone be surprised to learn that Collier and Horowitz are more anti-Sandinista than the anti-Sandinistas?

I had better, after all that, confess to an error that crept into my own article. The call for *contra* support, "From Left Right," that Horowitz published several months prior to his State Department mission to Nicaragua appeared not in *Commentary*, as was said in my article, but in the January 1987 *Soldier of Fortune*. The two journals got confused during the editing. Collier and Horowitz go on about my "mendacity," but perhaps for obvious reasons they chose not to call attention to the one significant error of fact that did appear in what I wrote.

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CORRESPONDENCE *continued from page 2*

Demagogic references to "massacres" aside, laws cannot be based solely on the damage that lunatics can do to unarmed victims—else we might expect TNR to come out against cars, private planes, alcohol, and countless household substances. Despite the claim that only specifically named "rifles" would be affected, the pending crackdown would restrict *any* semiautomatic "capable" of accepting magazines holding ten or more cartridges; and since a magazine's capacity is *not* determined by the weapon's mechanism or even by its designer's intentions, this would mean *all* semiautomatics using detachable magazines, whether an Uzi or Colt pistol designed in 1900.

Semiauto magazine weapons have been used by civilians for almost a century; yet only now have they become the bogey-weapon of gun prohibitionists, displacing the "Saturday Night Special" and the allegedly "plastic" and detector-proof Glock pistol (which is actually neither). This obsession with particular weapons almost seems calculated to avoid confronting the real problems of crime (and madness) in our society—which is more dangerous today than when pistols could be purchased by mail.

WAYNE M. SARF
Riverdale, New Jersey

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PRAGUE DIARIST

Far Away Place

"DIE GEDANKEN SIND FREI," GOES the refrain from an old German folk song I first heard sung maybe 35 years ago by that banjo bolshevik Pete Seeger to show he hadn't been cowed by McCarthyism. Of course, the social order that most systematically imprisoned thoughts was the one revered by Seeger and his kind. Let's put this in perspective: not even apartheid South Africa messes with people's minds the way communism did—and still does in those near reaches of the empire where the ruling class has less to fear from NATO than from *glasnost* and *perestroika*. These defiant words from my hootenanny youth came back to me when I encountered a few gentle and brave men and women from the long internal exile. Yes, even under communism, the thoughts of rare individuals may be free. But the price is silence. Ideas, however, cannot be choked down forever. They issue sequentially in the samizdat of gestures, glances, whispers, tentative sentences, finally into polemics and even feuilletons. For testing this last stage, the Czech playwright Vaclav Havel went to jail. When we saw him fresh from his incarceration he seemed ready to challenge party orthodoxy again. But freedom did not mean that his plays, produced everywhere else, would now be put on in Czechoslovakia, not yet. There is no theater, however small, without official warrant. The authorities have recently even gone so far as to limit the availability of periodicals from the Soviet Union. They admit to an ugly past that still lives in the Czech present.

I WENT TO PRAGUE WITH MY youngest child to accompany (no, not on the piano) our friend Yo Yo Ma, there to play some concerts: three of the Bach suites and the Dvořák B Minor Cello Concerto, the intense and romantic heart of Bohemian music. Dvořák, it will be remembered, had a romance of his own with America, where he spent three years (and where he composed, among other works, this concerto). So there was something exquisitely just in Yo Yo, this incandescent master from the new world, playing Dvořák, as one listener put it, "as no one had ever played him before." I asked a Czech acquaintance why the orchestra seemed to be made up largely of old men. "You have to have acceptable opinions to secure an orchestra post. There were many such musicians in the early days when ideals could still disguise reality. Now there simply aren't enough young people willing to pretend." What happens in societies where politics counts for everything is that its most talented individuals are cut off from their own natural destinies, from society as a whole. Still, a ripple of change has wafted in from Russia: a translator we met, who'd been unable for years to get any of his work published, would now be able to see much of his backlog appear in print, but had to let it appear under a false name.

A YOUNG MAN TO WHOM WE WERE introduced had a Star of David hung round his neck. I asked whether he was a Jew. "No," he said, "but I wear this out of solidarity, first with the Jews who perished and whose deaths impoverished our country, secondly with Israel, whose fate represents that of all small nations threatened by its neighbors." It's remarkable how clearly people see the essences once they realize they've been fed lies. It should console the Israelis—and we Americans, too—to know that there are the deepest reservoirs of affection for communism's targeted enemies precisely among those who've lived under Communist rule. That's the significance of the Statue of Liberty as icon in Beijing.

WHAT WE LEARN FROM THE CRISIS now afflicting communisms everywhere is that unthinkable thoughts become thinkable only when economic production palpably betrays propaganda, when a generally recognized regress can no longer be explained by the doctrinal rationales for mobilization and sacrifice. The unraveling of communism, the maturing of its contradictions, so to speak, will come more slowly in Czechoslovakia because that society is still supping off the achievements of capitalism. They still produce usable and exportable products. Sugar is not rationed; everything is served with or under *schlag*. Indeed, while the politically valent and complacent comparison for Czechoslovakia is to other Communist states, the telling comparison is to its own past. Before the last war, Czechoslovakia had the sixth or seventh (depending on who was counting) highest per capita income in the world. That is the true measure of how communism affects an economy. The bill for the gradual decline will be called soon, and there will be no way to raise resources for overdue investments except through freedoms.

AN OLD SAW HAS IT THAT PRAGUE is the most beautiful Italian city outside of Italy. It's much more than that. Prague was lucky in a way that its people were not. With the complicity of the Western democracies (and Stalin) it fell to Hitler without a shot, "a far away place of which we know little," said the British prime minister of the moment. There remain long stretches of medieval and Renaissance architecture more or less intact. Even what remained of the old Jewish ghetto was not much touched by the Nazis. In their demonic way they had fixed on Prague to be the setting of a vast museum of the vanished race, sending much of the specifically cultural and religious booty here to be stored and catalogued. There are still standing six synagogues, one dating to the 11th century, the only existing Jewish town hall in Europe, and the haunting cemetery, gravestone upon gravestone, in which is buried the Maharal, a rabbinic sage who, it is said, "invented" the Golem. With these dazzling remains of old Christian and Jewish Europe accessible we will be forgiven for not having gone to the police museum. There we could have seen the stuffed dog that had the honor of tracking down and snaring the greatest number of would-be escapees from socialism. My daughter and I did happen on to the Klement Gottwald Museum, named for the Czech prime minister who had been head of the Communist Party since 1929. It's adorned only with exemplars of socialist realism, the aesthetics of intimidation. Good news: we were quite literally the only people visiting.

THE PRAGUE OF MY IMAGINATION was largely the Prague of Franz Kafka and Rainer Maria Rilke, of Max Brod and Erich Heller, a Prague speaking and writing in German. It has vanished without even the witness of a faded German word on a building. The half of it that was Jewish was slaughtered. The other half and their three million more German-speaking kin elsewhere in the country were uprooted and deported after the war to Germany by the pre-Communist democratic government of Edvard Beneš. History books do not record many objections to this vast expulsion. These were people, after all, who had cheered (and whose children would have cheered) when Hitler's troops occupied the Sudetenland, Moravia, Bohemia. These people, who admittedly had lived there for centuries, were not Czech patriots; they had harbored treasonous thoughts and many had committed treasonous acts. Did this justify a wholesale expulsion? And what justifies the other apparently perfectly tolerable expulsions carried out in our time, up to this very day? Or is the notion of "population transfer," its more euphonious equivalent, objectionable only when it is raised, however implausibly, by marginal elements of the Israeli ultraright?

MARTIN PERETZ

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WHO REDUCED ITS TRADE SURPLUS WITH THE US BY OVER 35% IN 1988?

WHICH COUNTRY SENT 14 "BUY AMERICAN" PURCHASING MISSIONS TO THE US, PURCHASING OVER $11 BILLION WORTH OF US GOODS.... AND TO SEND EVEN MORE? **PLANS**

WHICH US TRADING PARTNER REDUCED 4,800 TARIFFS IN 1988, TOWARD TRADE? **BALANCED**

WHICH COUNTRY INCREASED ITS IMPORTS OF AUTOS BY 250% IN 1988? **U.S.**

SINCE SEPTEMBER 1985 TILL NOW, WHICH COUNTRY'S CURRENCY HAS RISEN 50% AGAINST THE US DOLLAR TO HELP BALANCE **TRADE?**

So dramatic is the difference — even when compared to just a few years ago.
So accelerated are the accomplishments —
even the well-informed are surprised by the facts about Today's Taiwan.
As a trading partner, today's Taiwan realizes that balance is essential.
Toward that end, much has been done.
More will be done to achieve the goal of balanced trade with the US by the early 1990's.

TODAY'S TAIWAN

REPUBLIC OF CHINA

If you would like to know more about Today's Taiwan, please see the June 26 issue of TIME (Top Management) or Business Week (NY/DC/CHI/CAL)

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